

MEMOIRS

OF THE REIGN OF

KING GEORGE THE THIRD.

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OF THE REIGN OF

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CHAPTER I.

Victories of the Russians.—Altercation with France.—Position of the Duc de Choiseul.—Origin of his Power.—His Character.—Madame du Barry.—Her Influence opposed to that of the Duc.—Opposition to her Presentation at Court, which is at last effected.—General Dislike of the New Favourite.—Cabal against the Duc de Choiseul.—His Imprudent Conduct.—Projects for Restoring the Finances.—Trial of the Duc D'Aiguillon.—Anecdote of the Prince of Beauvau.—Extraordinary Letter of Louis the Fifteenth.

1769.

THUS ended the year 1769, leaving a prospect of very gloomy scenes at hand. In the last reign the House of Lords had acquired a great ascendant in the legislature; at the beginning of the present, the Crown had aimed at, and well nigh attained, an increase of the prerogative. The people were now grown formidable both to the King and Lords, and

openly attacked the House of Commons, their best real support. Against all the branches of the legislature the contest was certainly unequal, but the vibrations of the balance proved how nicely the constitution was poised. Yet so tremulous an equilibrium made it the more to be feared that one or other of the scales might preponderate. The union of all three against the people, by the Lords and Commons being sold to the King, was still more formidable. I shall conclude the history of the year with what relates to foreign politics.

The tide was turned in favour of the Russians. The victorious Grand Vizir, who had checked their success, was removed by an intrigue of the Seraglio; and his successor rashly venturing to give battle, was defeated with great loss: Choczim was taken, and Prince Gallitzin, who had been recalled on a notion of having failed, destroyed the Turkish army before he received the news of his disgrace. France and Spain were tempted to molest the Russian fleet as it should pass through the Mediterranean; and, as it was received and favoured in our ports, it was not improbable but the three powers would be drawn into the vortex of the war. We had actually subsisting with France a quarrel that disposition to a rupture would easily have blown up into very serious discussion. A French ship had come into one of our ports, but refused to lower

her pendant. On being fired at, the French captain continued to refuse striking the pendant, but declared himself our prize. France presented a strong memorial, and threatened reprisals. A parallel case had happened in Sir Robert Walpole's time, who had yielded the point by breaking the captain for one day, and promoting him the next. At this time a vigorous answer was returned, and in harsher terms than Mr. Conway thought necessary, who asking Lord Weymouth at Council if he had looked into the former case, he replied, No—and sent away the memorial without examining it. Lord Weymouth, as will appear hereafter, was not apt to avoid hostile measures.¹ Two thousand sailors were ordered to be raised: but so inattentive were the Ministers to any system, and so impossible was it for naval commanders, or West Indian governors to obtain the shortest moments of audi-

¹ Lord Weymouth was governed by Wood (author of the editions of *Palmyra* and *Balbec*), his secretary, who was suspected of having, in concert with Sullivan, betrayed the East India Company at the last peace. Wood was a great stockjobber, and now, and in the following year, was vehemently accused of bending the bow of war towards the butt of his interest. This was the more suspected, as, though we had now been the aggressors, France had for some time winked at the insult offered to their ship, and wished to receive no answer to their memorial, when Wood persisted in making a reply—which lowered the stocks. He who thus lowered them, could raise them again when he pleased.

ence, that this fervour of flippant resolution seemed a mere tribute to national clamour, not the consequence of any methodical determination.

The situation of the Duc de Choiseul dispelled those clouds. Prone as he was to attack us, and impatiently as he wished for occasions of signaling his ambitious genius, his master's pacific and indolent humanity, the embarrassed state of the French finances, and the storm ready to burst on his own head, left Choiseul neither means nor power of embroiling Europe farther. Their funds were deficient, their army not paid, and the Prime Minister was too extravagant and too volatile to attend to details of economy, or to strike out any considerable plans of frugality. He could neither find resources, nor men who could find any. D'Invaux,¹ an honest man, whom he had made Comptroller-General, fairly abandoned the trial in less than a year. It was a strange succedaneum on which the Duke pitched, and which in a man less mercurial would have spoken despair. He refused to select a new Comptroller, and told the King that the Chancellor ought to choose one,—thus screening himself from blame if the successor should fail, as was most probable; but

¹ Mainon D'Invaux saw that, with a Court so entirely demoralized as that of Louis the Fifteenth, any extensive financial reforms were impracticable. He had the disinterestedness to refuse the pension usually enjoyed by Ministers *en retraite*.—E.

at the same time certain, that a man placed by his enemy would not, if successful, prove a friend to one that had not recommended him. Maupeou, the Chancellor, was a very able man, as false as Choiseul was indiscreetly frank, and had long been that Duke's most shameless flatterer.¹ The Duke's true friends had warned him against raising Maupeou from the post of Vice-Chancellor to that of Chancellor. Choiseul did not deny that there was danger in it, but said, no other man was fit for the post. Choiseul presumed on maintaining ascendant enough to control him. Maupeou, too, did not want confidence, but his was backed by art and method. Choiseul despised his enemies—Maupeou despised nothing but principles.

The Duc de Choiseul, denying all hostile intentions in his Court, offered to allow us to send a person to Toulon to see that no preparations for war were carrying on there; and before the end of the year, the Comte du Châtelet returned to England to confirm the pacific assurances that had been given.

As the interior of the Court of France is scarce known in this country, a short account of the intrigues at the time I am describing, may be a present

¹ The Princess of Beauvau told me this story of him when he was Vice-Chancellor:—She found fault with the situation of his house; Maupeou replied he could see the Hôtel de Choiseul from the windows of his garrets, and that was felicity enough.

not unacceptable to posterity. I passed many months at Paris in four different years, had very intimate connections there with persons of the first rank, and of various factions; and I spent five evenings in a week with the Duchesse de Choiseul and her select friends in the summer of 1769. The Duke was often of the party; and his levity and her anxiety on his account let me into many secrets, and explained enough of the rest to make me sufficiently master of the critical situation of the Minister at that time. I must take up his story a little farther back to make it perfectly intelligible.

Madame de Pompadour, who to the end of her life governed Louis XV. by habit, by which he was always governed, had established the Duc de Choiseul in the Ministry, and left him in possession of the chief share of power. Cardinal de Fleury and she had been successively absolute: but the King had never resigned himself entirely to anybody else. The Duc de Choiseul had quick parts, and dispatched business with the same rapidity that he conceived it. His ambition was boundless, his insolence ungoverned,¹ his discretion unrestrained,

¹ Madame d'Esparbès, a woman of quality, was one of the mistresses that succeeded Madame de Pompadour, and hated the Duc de Choiseul. As he was one day coming down the great staircase at Versailles he met her going to the King. He took her by the hand, told her he knew her designs, led her down, returned to the King, and obtained an order for her appearing no

his love of pleasure and dissipation predominant even over his ambition. He was both an open enemy and a generous one, and had more joy in attacking his foes than in punishing them. Whether from gaiety or presumption, he never was dismayed. His vanity made him always depend on the success of his plans; and his spirits made him soon forget the miscarriage of them. He had no idea of national or domestic economy, which being a quality of prudence and providence, could not enter into so audacious a mind. He would project and determine the ruin of a country, but could not meditate a little mischief, or a narrow benefit. In private his sallies and good humour were pleasing, and would have been more pleasing if his manner had not been overbearing and self-sufficient. The latter created him enemies; the former, friends.¹ Among the first were the Maréchal de Richelieu and the Duc d'Aiguillon. To the impertinence of a fashionable old beau,² Richelieu added all the little intrigues

more at Court. When Madame du Barry became the favourite mistress, by the intrigues of Maréchal de Richelieu, the Duc de Choiseul, seeing her pass through the gallery at Versailles, said to the Maréchal, "N'est ce pas Madame de Maintenon qui passe?" —a satire on Richelieu, who was so old as to remember the latter, for paying court in the dregs of life to the former, and marking his contempt for both the mistress and her flatterer.

¹ See the character of Choiseul, *supra*, vol. ii. p. 243.

² I one evening heard the Maréchal relate the histories of his

and treacheries of a Court, having tried every method but merit to raise himself to the first post. At past seventy he still flattered himself with the vision of pleasing women¹ and governing the King, because the King at near sixty had not done being pleased with women. The Duc d'Aiguillon² was universally abhorred. His abominable tyranny and villany in his Government of Bretagne had made him dreaded ; and his ambition being much superior to his abilities, he had betrayed the badness of his heart before he had reached the object to which he aspired.³ The Duc de Choiseul despised Richelieu, and had kept

five imprisonments in the Bastille. The first was for having, at fifteen, hid himself under the bed of the Duchess of Burgundy, the King's mother. The second, I think, was for following the Regent's daughter in the dress of a footman when she went to marry the Duke of Modena. I forget the others, or he had not time to finish them, for though he related well, he was not concise.

¹ Four or five years after the period I am speaking of, the Maréchal was greatly disgraced by seducing a married woman of quality, Madame de St. Vincent, descendant of the famous Madame de Sevigné. The suit between them made considerable noise. At his hotel in Paris he built a pavilion in his garden, luxuriously furnished, for his amours ; as it was supposed to be built with his plunder of the Electorate of Hanover, it was nicknamed *Le Pavillon d'Hanovre*.

² In his eighty-third year he married his third wife, who, it is said, had too much reason to complain of his infidelities. This heartless voluptuary died in 1788, at the great age of ninety-two.—E.

³ See *supra*, vol ii. p. 245.— E.

down d'Aiguillon. They were connected before; their resentments and views united them more intimately, but it was the contemptible one that shook their antagonist's power.

There was a Comte du Barry, said to be of a noble family.¹ It was much more certain that he was a sharper and a pimp, nominally to the Maréchal, frequently so to the young English that resorted to Paris, where he furnished them with opera girls, and drew them into gaming. Two years before he was known for loftier intrigues, the Lieutenant de Police civilly warned some English lords not to haunt Du Barry's house, lest he should find them there when, as he expected, he should be forced to visit a place so scandalous. Du Barry, in quest of a more plentiful harvest, came to London, and exercised his vocation at taverns. In his Parisian seraglio, was a well-made girl of the town, not

¹ He claimed affinity with the Barrys, Earls of Barrymore, and that family did acknowledge the relationship, and had the meanness, when so many French would not, to grace the mistress's triumph at Versailles. [This alludes to Lady Barrymore, a foolish woman, whom Walpole ridicules in his Correspondence. An amusing life of the Comte du Barry is given in the *Bio-graphie Universelle*, partly from an autobiographical MS. He seems to have been a consummate blackguard. He perished by the guillotine in 1794. A more favourable account of the Du Barrys is to be found in *Capefigue*, the panegyrist of every Bourbon king but Henry the Fourth.—(Louis XV., et la Société du XVIII. Siècle, t. iv. pp. 106–111.)—E.]

remarkably pretty, called Mademoiselle L'Ange. After passing through every scene of prostitution, this nymph was pitched upon by the Cabal for overturning the ascendant of Choiseul. To ensure her attachment to them, and to qualify her for the post she was to occupy in the State,¹ they began with marrying her to the brother of her pander, Du Barry. The next step was to prevail on Belle, the King's first valet de chambre, and first minister of his private hours, to introduce her to the Monarch. After such a succession of beauties as he had known, and no stranger to the most dissolute, too, the King was caught with such moderate charms, which had not even the merit of coming to his arms in their first bloom.

At first a sort of mystery was observed. But the fair one gained ground rapidly, and Solomon soon began to chant the perfections of his beloved. The Court was shocked to hear to what an idol of clay they were to address their homage. They were accustomed to bow down before a mistress—but took it into their heads that the disgrace consisted in her being a common girl of the town. The King's daughters, who had borne the ascendant of Madame de Pompadour in their mother's life,

¹ It was a most absurd etiquette at the Court of France that the King's mistress should be a married woman,—perhaps for fear of the precedent of Madame de Maintenon.

grew outrageous, though she was dead, at the new favourite, for being of the lowest class of her profession; and instead of regarding this amour as only ridiculous, treated it with a serious air of disobedience, that would have offended any man but so indulgent and weak a father, or a very wise one. The poor King blushed, and by turns hesitated and exalted his mistress. In private the scene was childish: his aged Majesty and his indelicate concubine romped, pelted one another with sugar-plums, and were much oftener silly than amorous. The Faction did not sleep: the next point was that Madame du Barry should be presented publicly. The King promised: her clothes and liveries were made.

Instead of attempting to remove or buy the new mistress, the Duc de Choiseul's conduct was as imprudent and rash as the King's was pitiful. He spoke of Madame du Barry publicly, without decency or management; which being quickly carried to her, and she complaining of it, he said at his own table, before a large company:—"Madame du Barry est très mal informée; on ne parle pas de câlins chez moi." The King's irresolution and the Minister's insolence, suspended the abjection of the courtiers. Even the men avoided the mistress; and when the King proposed to carry any of them to her, they excused themselves, slipped away, or

were silent. Had they never been mean, such conduct had been noble.

In this suspense, inquiry was made for some lady of great rank to present the new Countess. Not one could be found that would stoop to that office. Maréchal Richelieu was forced to fetch an obscure lady from Bordeaux. The presentation, however, was delayed. Madame, the eldest of the King's daughters, took to her bed, and protested she would not receive the mistress. This stopped it for some time. The Duc de la Vauguion, Governor of the Dauphin, a great bigot and partisan of the Jesuits, went to Madame, and advised her to be civil to the Countess. She asked him if he came by the King's orders? He said, No, but as a well-wisher to her Royal Highness. She bade him instantly quit the room; and the hypocrite reaped nothing but the shame of having prostituted himself to so scandalous an office for the good of the Church—the zealot party hoping everything from the rising Cabal—and, in fact, as despotism soon took such strides under the new influence, enthusiasm had reason to flatter itself with a restoration, too, under a doating Prince, a common strumpet, an old debauchee, and a profligate swindler, aided by such adjuncts as the Head of the Law and D'Aiguillon, who breathed the very spirit of the Inquisition. This junto soon called a female saint

no Penelope, was hurried on by equal impetuosity, and by rancour, to another person, whom I shall mention presently: yet, divested of their passions, both these viragos had uncommonly good understandings. There was a third person, who it was more surprising took the same line, though regulated by the same decency that governed all her actions. This was the Duchesse de Choiseul, a woman in whom industrious malice could not find an imperfection, unless that charming one of *studying* to be a complete character. She was too virtuous to fear reproach or contagion from civilities to the mistress, and should have left it to the Duchess and Princess to be disdainful prudes.¹

¹ I once said this very thing to her. I was sitting by her at her own house at some distance from the rest of the company, and we were talking of the stand making against Madame du Barry. The Duchesse de Choiseul asked me if that opposition of the nobility to the King's pleasure would not be reckoned greatly to their honour in England? I answered coldly, "Yes, Madam." "Come," said she, "you are not in earnest; but I insist on you telling me seriously what you think." I replied, "Madam, if you command me, and will promise not to be angry, I will tell you fairly my opinion." She promised she would. "Then," said I, "I think this is all very well for Mesdames de Beauvau and de Grammont; but *you*, Madam, had no occasion to be so scrupulous." She understood the compliment, and was pleased—and I knew she would not dislike it, as it was no secret to me that she was violently jealous of and hated her sister-in-law; and I knew, too, that her warmth against Madame du Barry was put on, that Madame de Grammont might not

Yet in a quiet style she was not less earnest than they in soliciting her husband not to bend to the ignominy of the hour. The King, who, by a singular situation, opened all letters, having the chief postmaster his own creature, and not the Minister's, read the Duchesse's importunities with her husband; and as he had expected more duty from her, re-

appear to have more zeal against the Duc de Choiseul's enemy than she had. When she advised her husband to resign, she was more sincere. Her warmest wish was to live retired with her husband, on whom she doted; and she perhaps thought the Duchesse de Grammont did not love her brother enough to quit the world for him. She herself was once on the point of retiring into a convent from the disgusts the Duchesse de Grammont continually gave her. The Duke always sat between his wife and sister at dinner, and sometimes kissed the latter's hand. Madame de Choiseul was timid, modest, and bashful, and had a little hesitation in her speech. Madame de Grammont took pleasure in putting her out of countenance. When the Duke was banished, his wife and sister affected to be reconciled, that their hatred might not disturb his tranquillity. Madame de Choiseul was pretty, and remarkably well made, but excessively little, and too grave for so spirituous a man. Madame de Grammont, with a fine complexion, was coarsely made, had a rough voice, and an overbearing manner, but could be infinitely agreeable when she pleased. Madame de Choiseul was universally beloved and respected, but neglected; Madame de Grammont was hated by most, liked by many, feared and courted by all, as long as her brother was in power. Her own parts, and the great party that was attached to the Duke, even after his fall, secured much court to the Duchesse de Grammont. The Duke esteemed his wife, but was tired of her virtues and gravity. His volatile gallantry did not confine itself to either.

sented her behaviour more than that of the two other dames.

After an anxious suspense of three months, and when the public began to think the presentation warded off, it suddenly took place. The King returning from hunting, found (no doubt by concert) Maréchal Richelieu, who was in waiting in the outward room with a letter in his hand. The King asked what it was? "Sire," said the Duke, "it is from Madame du Barry, who desires the honour of being presented to your Majesty." "With all my heart," replied the King; "she may come to-morrow, if she pleases." This was said aloud. The Duc de Choiseul and Versailles learnt the news at the same moment. Next day all Paris was there to see the ceremony.

Notwithstanding such indications of the Cabal being possessed of the King's confidence without the privity of the Minister, the faction of the latter had established such a tone, that the person of all France who seemed most in disgrace, was the new mistress. The men, indeed, began by degrees to drop their visits at her apartment, and then sparingly to appear at her toilet. The women shunned her as they do an unhappy young damsel, who has fallen a victim to a first and real passion. At Marly, in the very salon with the King, it was a solitude round his mistress: and one or two of the

ladies attending the Mesdames deigning to leave their names at her door, were scratched out of the list for Marly by *Madame*. On the other hand, the Duchesses de Choiseul and Grammont and the Princesse de Beauvau, refusing to stoop even to that piece of form, were totally excluded from the King's suppers. Instead of being mortified, they engaged all their female relations in the same insult.

It became necessary for the King to form a new set of company; yet all his authority could assemble but five or six women of rank, and those of the most decried characters, except the last I shall mention. There was Madame de l'Hôpital, an ancient mistress of the Prince de Soubize; the Comtesse de Valentinois, of the highest birth, very rich but very foolish, and as far from a Lucretia as Madame du Barry herself. Madame de Flavacourt was another, a suitable companion to both in virtue and understanding. She was sister to three of the King's earliest mistresses, and had aimed at succeeding them. The Maréchale Duchesse de Mirepoix¹ was the last, and a very important acquisition.

¹ Madame de Mirepoix was the eldest daughter of the beautiful Princesse de Craon, mistress of Leopold, Duke of Lorraine, who married her to Monsieur de Beauvau, a poor nobleman of an ancient family, whom he got made a Prince of the Empire. [She was a woman of extraordinary wit and cleverness, but totally without character. Many amusing anecdotes of her may

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It became necessary for the King to form a new set of company; yet all his authority could assemble but five or six women of rank, and those of the most decried characters, except the last I shall mention. There was Madame de l'Hôpital, an ancient mistress of the Prince de Soubize; the Comtesse de Valentinois, of the highest birth, very rich but very foolish, and as far from a Lucretia as Madame du Barry herself. Madame de Flavacourt was another, a suitable companion to both in virtue and understanding. She was sister to three of the King's earliest mistresses, and had aimed at succeeding them. The Maréchale Duchesse de Mirepoix¹ was the last, and a very important acquisition.

¹ Madame de Mirepoix was the eldest daughter of the beautiful Princesse de Craon, mistress of Leopold, Duke of Lorraine, who married her to Monsieur de Beauvau, a poor nobleman of an ancient family, whom he got made a Prince of the Empire. [She was a woman of extraordinary wit and cleverness, but totally without character. Many amusing anecdotes of her may

No man, no woman in France, had a superior understanding; and it was as agreeable as it was profound. Haughty, but supple, she could command respect even from those that knew her; and could transform herself into, or stoop to, any character that suited her views. All this art, all these talents, were drowned in such an overwhelming passion for play, that though she had long had singular credit with the King, she reduced her favour to an endless solicitation for money to pay her debts. Her constant necessities were a constant source of degrading actions. She had left off red, and acted devotion to attain the post of Dame d'Honneur to the Queen; the very next day she was seen riding backwards with Madame de Pompadour in the latter's own coach. In one of her moments of poverty she had offended Choiseul by matching her nephew, the Prince d'Henin, with the daughter of Madame de Monconseil, a capital enemy of the Prime Minister, but rich and intriguing.¹ To accelerate the Prime Minister's ruin, to secure her own favour, and in opposition to her

be found in the memoirs of the day, especially those of Madame de Haussez.—E.

¹ Madame de Monconseil was the friend and correspondent of Lord Chesterfield, whose letters to her show that he entertained a high opinion of her sense and good breeding.—(See Lord Chesterfield's Letters, vol. iii. p. 159, note. Lord Mahon's edition.)—E.

sister-in-law, the Princesse de Beauvau, Madame de Mirepoix now united herself strictly, not only with the mistress, but with Maréchal Richelieu, who, having killed her first husband, the Prince of Lixin, thirty years before in a duel, had been obliged, as much as possible, to shun her company. But in all this scene of hatred and intrigue, nothing came up to the enmity between the Maréchale and the Princesse. That the latter boasted of it was not surprising. The former, as cool as the Princesse, was outrageous—confessed it too. The first fruits of her complaisance, was a gift of an hundred thousand livres from the King. One day she attempted to explain away this reward to her niece, Madame de Bussy. “It was promised to me,” said Madame de Mirepoix, “a year ago; but from the disorder of the finances I did not obtain it till now; but it was not in consideration of my attention to Madame du Barry.” “No surely, Madam,” replied the other; “it would not have been enough.”¹

¹ It is due to the satisfaction of the reader that I should give an account how a stranger could become so well acquainted with the secret history of the Court of France. I have mentioned my intimacy with the Prince and Princesse de Craon. It was in the years 1740 and 1741, when the Prince was head of the Council there, and my father was Prime Minister of England, I resided thirteen months at Florence, in the house of Sir Horace Mann, our resident and my own cousin—passed almost every evening at the Princesse’s, and being about two years older than their son the Prince de Beau-

The King having gratified his mistress, was very desirous of preserving peace; and, as usual, unwilling to change his Minister. The Duc de Choiseul availed himself of this indolence, and, to re-establish the appearance of his credit, obtained the recall of

vau, contracted a friendship with him, and was with the whole family at Rome when the Prince went thither to receive the toison d'or from the Prince of Santa Croce, the Emperor's Ambassador. That connection with her family soon made me as intimate with Madame de Mirepoix on her arrival in England, which my frequent journeys to Paris kept up. Madame de Monconseil had been in correspondence with my father; I was acquainted with her in 1739, and renewed my visits in 1765. and often since. Her house was the rendezvous of the Duc de Choiseul's enemies, and I have supped there with Maréchal Richelieu and Madame de Mirepoix. The Dowager Duchesse d'Aiguillon was an intimate friend of my friend Lady Hervey, and was remarkably good to me. In England I was as intimate with the Comte and Comtesse du Châtelet, the bosom friends of the Duc de Choiseul, and was regularly of their private suppers twice a-week, just at the beginning of Madame du Barry's reign; and as they knew how well I was at the Hôtel de Choiseul, and consequently better acquainted than almost any man in England with what was passing, it was an entertainment to them to talk to me on those affairs; at the same time that I had had the prudence never to take any part which would not become a stranger, and was thus well received by both parties. The Maréchal Richelieu was an old lover of the Dowager Duchesse d'Aiguillon, and constantly at her house; and yet she acted a handsome and neutral part; and it was at last that with great difficulty her son could make her go to Madame du Barry. But the great source of my intelligence was the celebrated old blind Marquise du Deffand, who had a strong and lasting friendship for me. As she hated politics, she entered into none, but being the intimate friend of the Duchesse de Choiseul,

the Parliament of Bretagne, the deepest wound he could inflict on the Duc d'Aiguillon. The latter returned the blow. The Duc de Chaulnes was dying;¹ D'Aiguillon treated with him for the purchase of the Chevaux legers, and secretly, by the

who called her "granddaughter" (Madame du Dessand having had a grandmother Duchesse de Choiseul), of the Prince of Beauvan and of Madame de Mirepoix, I saw them all by turns at their house, heard their intrigues, and from her: and on two of my journeys I generally supped five nights in a week with her at the Duchesse de Choiseul's, whither the Duke often came—and in those, and in the private parties at Madame du Dessand's I heard such extraordinary conversations as I should not have heard if I had not been so very circumspect, as they all knew. I shall mention some instances hereafter. Here are two. Madame de Mirepoix soon grew not content with Madame du Barry. I was one evening very late on the Boulevard with Mesdames du Mirepoix and Du Dessand. The latter asked the former, "*Que deviendrait Madame du Barry, si le Roi venoit à mourir?*" "*Que deviendrait elle?*" replied she, with the utmost scorn; "*elle iroit à la Salpêtrière, et elle est très faite pour y aller.*" On the death of Louis the Fifteenth Madame de Mirepoix was disgraced; on which her brother, the Prince de Beauvan, in compassion, was reconciled to her, and she and the Princess pretended to be reconciled, and always kissed when they met. I saw them and their niece, the Viscountesse de Cambis, act three of Molière's plays two nights together, to divert Madame du Dessand, who was ill. This was in 1775. Yet when I went to take leave of Madame de Mirepoix, she opened her heart to me, and showed me how heartily she still hated her sister-in-law.

¹ He died in 1769. He was a virtuous man, and a great mathematician—qualities equally uncommon in a courtier of the days of Louis the Fifteenth.—E.

mistress's influence, obtained the King's consent. The Duc de Choiseul laboured to defeat it, but in vain. Now again to prop his credit, he procured to have the Procureur-General du Châtelet sent to the Bastille, for announcing that he was to be Comptroller General in five days. This was an able man and a creature of the Cabal. The King, too, was prevailed on to say in council, that he heard there were reports of an approaching change in the ministry, and did he know the authors, he would thrust them into a dungeon. To revive their hopes, the mistress herself carried the Duc d'Angoulême his new patent.

At the same time, probably by the King's direction, in hopes of some accommodation, the mistress sent for the Duc de Choiseul. He replied, If she wanted him, she might come to him. She sent again that she was not dressed, and must see him. It was to ask preferment for that very postmaster that was his enemy. The Duke went; and though he staid an hour and a quarter with her, came away refusing her request; and leaving her, who had been only an instrument of the Cabal, an offended principal. The weakness of this conduct was the more remarkable, as he had the example of his immediate predecessor, the Cardinal de Bernis, before his eyes.¹ From an indigent, sonnet-writing abbé,

¹ The Comte du Châtelet told me that the Duc de Choiseul

Madame de Pompadour had raised Bernis to the Cardinalate, and to the office of Prime Minister. In six weeks he refused to wait on her in her apartment, as if incompatible with his sacred dignity—and as if ingratitude was compatible with it! In six days she sent him to his bishopric.¹

At Fontainebleau, hostilities were carried very high, but came to no decision. It was known, that though the Duc de Choiseul had staid so long with the mistress, he had rather exasperated than softened her. When they were partners at whist with the King, she made faces and shrugged up her shoulders at the Minister. The King disapproved this, and forbade it. One night after the Court's return to Versailles, the Maréchal de Soubize, playing against her, said to her on her scoring two by honours, "Non, Madame, vous n'aviez pas les honneurs; vous n'aviez que le roi." The King laughed, and so did the mistress violently; it being said without design, by Monsieur de Soubize, who was extremely decent, and not hostile to her. Had he been her friend, he could have decided the contest at once to the ruin of Choiseul; for Soubize was better than any man with the King; and, had he having learnt from Madame de Pompadour that she intended the disgrace of the Cardinal, and the Duke for his successor, and observing that the Cardinal had no apprehension of his approaching fall, was so generous as to give him warning of it.

¹ See, however, vol. iii. p. 367, note.—E.

not wanted ambition, might have been minister himself.

With all her antipathy to Monsieur de Choiseul, Madame de Mirepoix had too much parts not to be sensible of his, and of his engaging vivacity. One day, that to please her Madame du Barry was railing at the Duke, she caught herself, and said, “*Mais comprenez vous, Madame, qu'on puisse tant hait un homme qu'on ne connoit pas?*” Madame de Mirepoix replied, “*Je le comprendois bien moins, Madame, si vous le connoissiez*”—as flattering and genteel a compliment as could be made by an enemy.

The desperate state of the finances brought the Duke as near to his ruin as the Cabal could do. His new Comptroller-General, to whom he paid unbounded court, to give him spirits, could, as everybody had foreseen, produce no effectual plan: and though he offered one, it was rejected by the majority of the Council. The man, who was upright, desired leave to retire, said he had done his best, and had neither enriched himself nor his friends. The King ordered Choiseul to name another. Aware of the difficulty, and to avoid furnishing his enemies with a new handle for accusing him of miscarriage, he threw the burthen off himself, saying, it was the Chancellor's business. Maupeou, the Chancellor, named the Abbé du Terray, who immediately set out, with a violence and rigour beyond example, not

only lessening pensions and grants by the half, but striking at the interest on the debt; and was on the point of blowing up the credit of France entirely, especially with foreign countries. Choiseul probably inflamed the bankers of the Court; and then harangued so ably in Council against such breach of faith, that he carried it against the Comptroller, to make good their foreign engagements, the King himself saying, every man must tax himself, and that he himself had two thousand louis-d'ors, and would give them to support public credit.¹ This victory, and the clamours of the sufferers, endeared Choiseul more than ever to the nation. At the same time he gave a dangerous wound to his capital enemy, the Duc D'Aiguillon, who, perceiving the horror he had raised, or that had been raised, by the story propagated of having attempted to have La Chalotais poisoned, petitioned the King to allow him to be tried for his conduct in his government of Bretagne. Choiseul, under pretence of justifying him, prevailed on the King, not only to consent, but to order the trial in his own presence at Paris, whither the Parliament was ordered to repair and

¹ This indifference to the public credit was a fatal error in the reforms of the Abbé Terray, and alone sufficed to prove his ignorance of the elementary principles of finance. He is represented to have been morose, disagreeable, and dissolute. His dismissal from office was one of the earliest and certainly most popular acts of Louis the Sixteenth.—E.

be prosecutors,—a measure big with a cruel alternative; as, if guilty, the Duc D'Aiguillon would not be able to conceal his guilt from the King; and, if acquitted, the novelty of the trial, and the known partiality of his master, would seem to have screened him from conviction. The Parliament was very averse to this new mode, but was obliged to acquiesce; and so great vexation did the accused undergo, that at the very beginning of the trial it threw him into a jaundice. After the trial had gone on for many weeks, the King suddenly put a stop to it, forbade all further proceedings, declared his approbation of the Duc d'Aiguillon's whole conduct, and that the latter had done nothing but by his orders, and for his service—a sentence, that left the public at liberty to surmise the worst, when the criminal did not dare to trust his cause even to so partial a protector! The sequel of these intrigues will appear in the following years.

I shall add, as notes to the foregoing account of the Court of France, some remarkable passages that will throw more light on it. I have mentioned the friendship of the Duchesse de Choiseul for Madame du Deffand. The Prince de Beauvau was so attached to the latter that he scarce ever missed seeing her one day when he was in Paris: and as I had known him above thirty years, and came so often to Paris and lived so much with them, he and the Princess

talked their politics before me without reserve. One day in particular, after the Duc de Choiseul's fall, and the removal of the Prince from his government of Languedoc in consequence, Madame du Deffand was expressing her fears to the Prince and Princess, that he would be removed also from his post of Captain of the King's Guard. "Oh!" said the Prince, "the King will not take that from me for his own sake." Madame du Deffand asked what he meant? "Why," replied the Prince, "he would not think his person safe if I was not the Captain of his Guard. When Prince Charles passed the Rhine, I asked leave to go thither as a volunteer. The King would give me no answer for three days, and then refused me leave: he was afraid to be without me." In short, they said such strong things, that I feared they would, on reflection, be sorry they had gone so far before a foreigner, and therefore, and that they might not think me curious, I rose and went into the next room. When I returned, the Princess, who was exceedingly quick-sighted, suspected my motive, and questioned me whether she had not penetrated me. When I owned she was in the right, "Now," said she, "you think you have done a very civil thing, but you have done a very rude one; for if you thought these things that we have said too strong for you to hear, it is telling us that they were too strong for us to utter."

With all this good sense, her haughtiness and violence were extreme. In 1775, on the Princesse de Lamballe being placed above the Princesse de Chimay in the Queen's family, the Prince and Princesse de Beauvau would have had their niece, Madame de Chimay, quit her place rather than submit. Madame du Dessand disputed the point with them. I said nothing. When they were gone, Madame du Dessand asked me on which side I was. I said on her's. "Then," said she, "how could you be such a flatterer to them as not to take my part?" "Because," said I, "you argued only on their duty to the King and Queen: but my reasons were too strong to be given. Monsieur de Beauvau, whose mother was mistress, and he himself a natural son of only a Duke of Lorraine, thinks it below his niece to give place to the Princesse de Lamballe, whose husband's grandfather was a natural son of Louis Quatorze!"¹

But the most extraordinary anecdote was the following letter, which Louis the Fifteenth, when he was endeavouring to pacify the civil war in his Court between Madame du Barry and the Duc de Choiseul, wrote to the latter. It is so extraordinary,

¹ The Princesse de Lamballe had married the eldest son of the Duc de Penthièvre. She perished in the Revolution. Her Memoirs, an agreeable if not a perfectly authentic work, were published in 1826—E.

his Majesty even hinting a possibility of his *marrying his mistress*, that I must give an account how it came into my hands. It was read to Madame du Deffand by the Duc or Duchesse de Choiseul, but they would not give her a copy. However, as she heard it more than once, she dictated to her secretary as many of the passages as she could remember, but disguised the names under Persian names for fear of losing the paper or having it found in her possession. That copy she gave me, which I here set down, I solemnly protest, word for word as I received it. It is a striking picture of that Monarch's character, full of weakness, good-humour, frankness ;—and still more of his love of quiet and disinclination to change a Minister he was used to.

“Anecdotes Persannes.

“Sapor, Sultan de Perse, écrivit une lettre fort singulière à son Atemadoulet, dont voici quelques fragmens :

“Vous connoissez mal la personne que j'aime ; vous êtes environné de gens qui vous préviennent contre elle : ne les écoutez point, il y a long tems qu'ils me déplaisent. Je vous promets de vous mettre bien avec celle que j'aime, et de détruire toutes les préventions qu'on veut lui donner contre vous. Je vous dirai confidemment que je ne puis me passer de femmes. Celle ci me plaît, et si je

l'épousois, tout le monde tomberoit à ses genoux. Le Mogol,¹ voulant se marier, et voulant épouser une belle femme, fit plusieurs voyages sans rencontrer ce qu'il cherchoit. Je vous le répète, je ne puis me passer de femmes ; mais il m'en faut une belle. La sœur du Mogol,² que je pourrois épouser, ne l'est pas. La personne, avec qui je vis, me plaît ; consentez à bien vivre avec elle ; rien n'est plus aisé, et vous m'obligerez infiniment.'

"L'Atemadoulet resista ; et quelques mois après il fut disgracié." Madame du Deffand adds, "J'oubliois un trait de cette lettre ; 'je ne veux point une femme de qualité : je ne veux point non plus à l'exemple de Thamas,³ mon ayeul, une matrone.'"

Perhaps it will not be thought very wise in the Duc de Choiseul to have resisted such a letter. Should the original ever appear, as is not impossible, it will corroborate the truth of the rest that I have related. I trust much to collateral evidence for confirming the veracity of these Memoirs.

¹ The Emperor Joseph the Second, after the death of his second wife. He had been passionately fond of his first wife, who was very amiable. The second was as disagreeable.

² Not the present Queen of France, but an Archduchess, her eldest sister. The double marriage was much talked of, and this letter proves that the King had had it in his thoughts.

³ Louis the Fourteenth, who married Madame de Maintenon.

CHAPTER II.

Irish Parliament Prorogued.—Public Feeling.—Opening of the British Parliament.—Lord Chatham proposes an Amendment to the Address.—Debates in the House of Commons on the illegal Election of Lutterell.—Daring Conduct of Burke and Sir George Saville.—Lord Camden loses the Seals.—Dismissal of the Earl of Huntingdon.—Resignation of Lord Granby.—Charles Yorke refuses the Seals.—Death of Sir John Cust.—Acceptance and Suicide of Yorke.—Sir Fletcher Norton elected Speaker.—Disinterested Conduct of General Conway.—Motion in the Lords for an Inquiry into the State of the Nation.—Marquis of Rockingham and Lord Chatham.—The Duke of Grafton determines to Resign.—Hostile Motion of Dowdeswell in the House of Commons.—Interviews of Conway with Grafton and his Secretary.—Intrigues against the Duke of Grafton.—His Resignation and Character as a Minister.

1770.

As a question of greater magnitude had seldom been agitated than the demanded dissolution of the Parliament, the expectation of the public rose in proportion as the session approached. Not that any man supposed the King, fortified by a majority of both Houses, would listen to that petition; but in what manner he would reject the prayer of so many

towns and counties, and how that rejection would be received by men who did not seem disposed to be corrected by reproof, was matter of curiosity to all, and to many a subject of deep anxiety. Before the moment arrived, it was known that the Lord Lieutenant had prorogued the Parliament of Ireland; a motion had been made to inquire of him if he was ordered or intended to prorogue them before the usual time? He answered, that he should always be desirous of complying with their requests, when he could do it with propriety: that he did not think himself authorized to disclose his Majesty's instructions to him upon any subject, without having received his Majesty's commands for so doing. That with regard to his own intentions, they would be regulated by his Majesty's instructions and by future events. Mr. Flood,¹ an able speaker, on whom Lord Townshend much depended, moved to adjourn, that they might do no business till they should receive a more favourable answer, but the proposal was rejected by a majority of 14; and the money bills arriving from England, they were passed; and then the Lord Lieutenant prorogued the Parliament.

In England, as a signal to the hostilities that were to ensue, the petition from Yorkshire was

¹ He was at this time supporting the Government against what he considered the anti-popular party.—E.

presented to the King on the 5th with several others; but the Mayor and Corporation of Liverpool addressed his Majesty against a petition then soliciting in their town; and as a new mark that the Court party, in the City of London, were recovering ground, Alderman Harley was chosen President of St. Bartholomew's, the first hospital in the metropolis, by 20 votes out of 22, against Beckford, though a senior Alderman and then Lord Mayor. But the want of unanimity was more noxious to the Opposition than all the efforts of their enemies. Lord Chatham's profusion had involved him in debts and great distress; and that distress reduced him to more humane condescension than he usually practised. He sent a message to Lord Rockingham, professing high esteem, and desiring a personal interview to remove former misunderstandings, and to cement a common union between the friends of the public. The Marquis, with ill-timed haughtiness, replied, that he lived in Grosvenor Square. The Earl sent again, that being very infirm, and confined at Hayes, it would be exceedingly kind in Lord Rockingham to come thither—the same answer as before: how sensible! to war on King and Parliament, and reject almost the only ally that had any weight! Wilkes, and the popular party in the City, Lord Rockingham shunned like the plague. In the House of Lords,

where he did not dare to open his mouth, and had scarce one follower that could, he pushed back the most admired orator of the age. Such was the able commander under whom the campaign opened on one side ! The general on the Court side (the Duke of Grafton) did not yield to him in trifling. How confounded was the avidity with which all mankind pressed for a sight of the King's speech, when they found not a word said on the petitions ; but instead of them, a lamentation about the horned cattle.¹ The first draught of the speech had run in a style of commendation of the House of Commons : this, as too insulting, Mr. Conway had obtained to be laid aside. He did not guess that the imagination of the Duke of Grafton could furnish nothing more to the purpose, or more interesting to the public, than the distemper amongst the cattle ! A preface so ridiculous could not detain men long from the serious business in question. In the Upper House, Lord Chatham, after descanting on the ambition of the House of Bourbon, turned to the election of Lutterell, and proposed an amendment of the address, to assure the King that they would immediately inquire into grievances, especially those on the Middlesex election. This motion, calculated to create a breach between the two Houses, was not agreeable even to several of

¹ Junius, Letter xxxvi.—E.

the Opposition ;¹ but he had drawn it himself,² and persisted in it, telling the House he would not have appeared but on so extraordinary an occasion. The Chancellor spoke strongly on the same side, and declared for the amendment ; as did Lord Temple, Lord Lyttelton, and Lord Shelburne ; the latter chiefly on the alarming posture of Europe, where we had not, could not get, an ally. The Duke of Grafton replied to the foreign part of the debate, answered for the tranquillity of Europe, and said we had not a difference there which could not easily be settled. Lord Mansfield and Lord Marchmont entered largely into the case of the Middlesex election ; and the former urged, that though the House of Commons should have done wrong, a breach between the two Houses would be much more fatal. Lord Chatham replied, but with so little precision and logic, as was usual with him when reduced to argue, that Lord Denbigh and

¹ Lord Rockingham had prepared another motion, but did not produce it, though offended at Lord Chatham's.

² When Lord Chatham's motion was shown to Grenville, he lifted up his eyes at seeing Wilkes's name in it. It was no doubt inserted to soothe Wilkes, who had lately abused him in a rancorous letter to Grenville ; for nothing exceeded Lord Chatham's pusillanimity to those who attacked him, except his insolence to those who feared him. At this time he did not avoid holding out hopes to the King's favourites, that he would not remove them if he came into power. "*I will not,*" said he, in his metaphoric rhodomontade, "*touch a hair of the tapestry of the Court.*"

Lord Sandwich, both keen, and the former brutal enough, when his brutality to opponents would be flattery at court, ridiculed him severely; and Sandwich professed he did not comprehend what Lord Chatham had meant, and defied any single Lord to give an account of what he had said. Lord Weymouth told the Chancellor sharply, that if it was so wrong as his Lordship had urged, to incapacitate Wilkes, his Lordship ought not to have set the Great Seal to the new writ—the Chancellor could only reply that he had not read the writ.¹ At ten at night, one hundred Lords to thirty-six rejected Lord Chatham's amendment. Lord Dartmouth conscientiously voted against his friends; the Duke of Northumberland, for popularity, against the Court.²

In the House of Commons, the success of the Administration was less brilliant, though their majority, as might be expected when the majority

¹ It might be inferred from this statement that it was the practice of the Lord Chancellor to examine the election writs before they pass the Great Seal. This is a duty, however, which neither Lord Camden nor any other Chancellor ever imposed upon himself, and I am informed that there is no instance of the Great Seal having been withheld from a writ which had passed through the Crown-office. In fact, whatever may have been the original intention of the law in requiring the Great Seal to be affixed to the Parliamentary writs, the Lord Chancellor's office in this respect has of late years become merely executive.—E.

² Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. p. 645.—E.

consisted of the criminals themselves, was very considerable: yet Lord Granby, swayed by Calcraft, and leaning towards Lord Chatham, who had made him commander-in-chief (though in truth he had owed something to every Ministry, and had paid them all with ingratitude),¹ balanced the credit of the victory a little by declaring he renounced and repented of his last year's vote for the expulsion of Wilkes. Dowdeswell proposed engaging to inquire into grievances. Barré said, disregard to petitions might teach the people to think of *assassination*. This outrageous expression passed without censure. Lord North spoke long and well. Conway endeavoured to recover Lord Granby, and mentioned the petitions with respect. Some of the members for Buckinghamshire declared the majority in their county had been against petitioning: and Mr. Grenville, then under deep affliction for the recent loss of his wife,² pleaded that he had not signed the petition, that he might not take any personal share in Wilkes's case. The Attorney-General and Nor-

¹ Lord Granby had just accepted a very considerable obligation from the Ministers. At the end of the last session they and their creatures in the House of Commons had most unjustly voted him the borough of Bramber, so legally the property of Sir Henry Gough, that he had been offered forty thousand pounds for it.

² Elizabeth, only daughter of Sir William Wyndham, and sister of the Earls of Egremont and Thomond. She was a woman of sense and merit, with strong passions.

ton censured the petitions, which Dunning, the Solicitor-General, defended. Rigby ridiculed them, and stated the great majority of towns and counties that had not concurred in them. The amendment was rejected by 254 against 138.¹

But it was next day, on the report, that the great blow was aimed at and in the House of Commons.² Burke on the former day had attacked the House itself, and hinted that the majority was so guilty that they did not dare to take notice of the insults offered to them, and the reproaches cast on them. On the report he added, that he was conscious he had deserved to be sent to the Tower for what he had said; but knew the House did not dare to send him thither. Sir George Saville adopted and used the same language. Lord North took notice of it, but said he supposed Sir George had spoken in warmth. "No," replied Saville coolly, "I spoke what has been my constant opinion; I thought so last night, I thought the same this morning. I look on this House as sitting illegally after their illegal act [of voting Lutterell representative for Middlesex]. They have betrayed their trust. I will add no epithets," continued he, "because epithets only weaken :

¹ A brief report of these debates is given in the Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. p. 668, note. It is obviously partial to the Opposition.—E.

² This spirited debate is reported in the Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. p. 668.—E.

therefore I will not say they have betrayed their country corruptly, flagitiously, and scandalously, but I do say they have betrayed their country; and I stand here to receive the punishment for having said so." Mr. Conway, sensible of the weight of such an attack from a man so respectable, alarmed at the consequences that would probably attend the punishment of him, and firm in his own irreproachable virtue, took up the matter with temper, wisdom and art, and showed the impropriety and indecency of such language; and by that address prevented Saville from repeating the provocation, and soothed the House into sober concern, before any reciprocal heat had been expressed against the offender: for though Serjeant Glynn asserted that when the House had been in the wrong, it was right to say so; and though Charles Fox replied with much applauded fire, moderation had made its impression, and a scene was avoided that might have had the most fatal termination. Not only was Sir George Saville composed and ready to provoke the whole wrath of the legislature, but had the Ministers dared to send him to the Tower, the Cavendishes, and the most virtuous and respectable of his friends, would have started up, would have avowed his language, and would have demanded to share his imprisonment. A dozen or twenty such confessors in the heart of a tumultuous capital would have been no

indifferent spectacle: the great northern counties were devoted to them. Then, indeed, the moment was serious! Fortunately there were none but subordinate Ministers in the House of Commons, not one of whom chose to cast so decisive a die. The House sat silent under its ignominy—a punishment well suited to its demerits: and the sword was not called in to decide a contest in which Liberty and the Constitution would probably have been the victims. This was in effect the critical day; for though the struggle continued, and not without material convulsions, yet the apprehensions of rougher commotions wore away. Losses, dissensions, profligacy, treachery, and folly dissipated great part of the Opposition, and began

“ *Ex illo fluere, ac retro sublapsa referri
Spes Danaüm !* ”

The Duke of Richmond was struck with the violence of Sir George Saville's behaviour, and lamented it to Mr. Conway and me. Sir George had told the Duke that it had been concerted with nobody, and that he should not repeat it every day, which would be womanish: but he was glad he had gone so far; it would convince the county of York that he had said nothing at the meeting which he would not maintain in the House. He intimated too, that if the dissolution was refused, he should go still

farther—but he never did. I said, Sir George's behaviour was the more blameable for not having acquainted his friends with his intention; he knew them to be conscientious and men of honour, knew they would not desert him; and thus had ventured embarking them without their consent: he would have been answerable for the lives and fortunes of all who might have fallen in the quarrel. His behaviour had tended to stir up insurrections, which would end in the loss of our liberties, as in the long run the Crown certainly, this King probably, would get the mastery. Could they withstand the King and both Houses? They had polled the nation, and the majority by far was against them. Not a dozen counties, and only a few boroughs, had petitioned. What strength should they have to support them? The greater part of England, all Scotland to a man, and Wales, were against them. Would Lord Chatham, would Lord Temple, would Grenville, join them, or not be the first to make their peace? I besought the Duke to mollify Sir George Saville—not to countenance him. "Good God, sir!" said the Duke, "do you think I would go into rebellion?" Mr. Conway discussed the merits of the question very ably, and showed it had ever been the usage of Parliament to incapacitate improper members. Lord Rockingham's friends had yielded to the incapacitation, and now disputed the

consequences. In a free government the minority must submit to the majority, or nothing could go on. Did it become Burke, an Irish adventurer, to treat the House of Commons with such unexampled insolence? "Do you think, my Lord," continued Conway, "that the majority will bear to hear themselves abused daily? Do you think we are more afraid than you are? Was it come to calling names, or to cutting throats?" The Duke bore this remonstrance with great temper: he had, indeed, as I have said, been staggered at the outrage of his friends, and I believe this conversation had so much weight with him, as to promote his moderating, and consequently preventing a repetition of such hostilities.

Humiliating to the House as were the speeches of Burke and Saville, that of the Chancellor had been more inflammatory, and more provoking, as founded in law, and coming from so eminent a member of the Administration. The Duke of Grafton accused him of having made no objection to Lutterell's admission; his friends affirmed he had; and Lord Sandwich allowed that he had reserved to himself a liberty of acting as he pleased on every question relating to Wilkes. The Chancellor's mind certainly fluctuated between his obligations to Lord Chatham and the wish to retain his post. The

Duke of Grafton's neglect determined the scale.¹ The King's speech had borne hard upon the Colonies, and had not been concerted with the Chancellor. All letters to our Governors in America had promised redress; but every post was accompanied with contradictions, too: so that no officer in America knew whether he was or was not to follow his instructions; or which of his instructions was to be the rule of his conduct. The Chancellor, judging his fate determined, had taken his part with spirit. The chiefs of the law and army, disgusted, might make a dangerous schism. I persuaded Mr. Conway to interpose with the Duke of Grafton and save

¹ It appears from Lord Camden's MS. letters to the Duke of Grafton, that he had in the first instance underrated the importance of Wilkes's case. He next entered heartily into the general indignation which Wilkes had excited. On the 3rd of April he writes, "If the precedents and the constitution warrant an expulsion, that perhaps may be right. A criminal flying his country to escape justice — a convict and an outlaw — that such a person should in open daylight throw himself upon the county as a candidate, his crime unexpiated, is audacious beyond description." Still, he believes that the public excitement on the subject will soon subside.

The proceedings in the Court of King's Bench, when Wilkes's counsel gave notice of a motion for a reversal of the outlawry and an arrest of judgment, made a deep impression on Lord Camden. His feelings had by this time cooled, and he viewed the case as a lawyer. He communicated his change of opinion to the Duke in a letter of the 20th of April, and although the communication was confidential, the bent of his mind seems to have been pretty

the Chancellor; but he found the Duke's resolution fixed, who told him he was to see a person of consequence at night on that subject. I said, "That person is Charles Yorke, who is afraid of being seen going into the Duke's house by day-light." It was; but first it had been thought necessary to make Lord Mansfield the compliment of offering him the Seals, who refused them, but boasted of the offer to Sir Gilbert Elliot. The latter, dissatisfied with the Duke of Grafton (and probably both Mansfield and Elliot desirous of getting rid of the Chancellor), trumpeted the secret round the town, till it came to well understood by his colleagues. As the difficulties increased he took the matter more to heart, and on the 9th of January 1769 he writes again to the Duke, expressing great uneasiness, and announcing distinctly his opposition to the view taken by the Cabinet of Wilkes's case. He pronounces it "a hydra multiplying by resistance, and gathering strength by every attempt to subdue it." "As the times are," he says, "I had rather pardon Wilkes than punish him. This is a political opinion independent of the merits of the case." These representations were fruitless. The Duke had taken his part, was committed to the King and the Cabinet, and, besides being of a hot temper, had become so exasperated by Wilkes's conduct as to consider his honour would suffer from making the slightest concession to such a man. Unhappily this difference of opinion materially affected the intercourse of the Duke with Lord Camden. The former admits and laments in his Memoirs that they seldom met during the summer of 1769. The Duke's marriage and frequent absence from London kept them still more apart, and in the autumn it is obvious from the tone of Lord Camden's letters that he felt the separation to be inevitable.—E.

Lord Camden's ears, who told the Duke he heard his fate was determined. The Duke did not deny it, and they parted civilly. Thus lost Lord Camden the Seals, valued at thirteen thousand pounds a-year. He had saved little or no money, and had four or five children. All he had obtained was a flying pension of 1500*l.* a-year, till his son should attain a Teller's place, of which he had the reversion. As the pension, which was granted on Ireland, had since been included in the new tax of four shillings in the pound on absentees, it was a littleness unworthy of the sacrifice he had made to ask, as Lord Camden did, to have the deduction made up to him.

As success had given spirit to the Court, and had converted their fears into vengeance, another victim was marked; this was the Earl of Huntingdon, Groom of the Stole, a man too much vaunted for talents which he had proved he did not possess, and destitute of that wealth and interest which so often supply the want of talents. By affecting personal attachment to the King, he had escaped in all the late changes; though his post would often have accommodated the Administration; but the vanity of his royal descent¹ having prompted him to ask

¹ He was the direct heir of George Duke of Clarence, whose daughter, Margaret Countess of Salisbury, was mother of Henry Pole, Lord Montacute, whose eldest daughter and heiress married an Earl of Huntingdon.

the title of Duke of Clarence, and a refusal following, he had flattered himself with obtaining it, as so many other titles had been wrenched from the Crown by Opposition. He absented himself on the first day of the session, and kept away his relation, Earl Ferrers. The King, glad of an opportunity of getting rid of him, too harshly sent for the golden key. Yet few pitied Lord Huntingdon, as few had pitied the Duke of Northumberland, who had both paid profuse court to Lord Bute, and had both deserted or duped him.¹ The post of Groom of the Stole was given to Lord Bristol, who rejoiced to find himself in so secure a harbour, and piously vowed not to risk himself by any want of the most servile assiduity and attendance. Lord Coventry² took occasion, as first Peer in the Bedchamber, to resent Lord Bristol's preferment; but was, in truth,

¹ Lord Huntingdon had flattered Lord Bute for some time that he would marry his second and favourite daughter, Lady Jane, afterwards married to Sir George Maccartney.

² George William Coventry, Earl of Coventry. He was the senior Peer, but Lord Robert Bertie was an older Lord of the Bedchamber than Lord Coventry; the post of Groom of the Stole was never given but to a peer. [Walpole describes him in 1752 as "a grave young Lord of the remains of the patriot breed." Little of the spirit of his ancestors seems to have descended to him. He was a Lord of the Bedchamber in two reigns, and led an easy luxurious life, being hardly known, except as the husband of one of the most beautiful women of the day. He died in 1809, at the advanced age of eighty-seven.—E.]

devoted to Lord Temple, and desirous of quitting the Court; as did the Duke of Manchester, too, another of the Bedchamber. The Duke of Beaufort was a greater loss. He had been the first convert of his family from Jacobitism, and now gave up Master of the Horse to the Queen, on some private dissatisfactions; yet, however, did not differ with the Court.

Severely as Lord Camden and Lord Huntingdon had been treated, no endeavours were spared to preserve Lord Granby. The Duke of Grafton stooped to every kind of intercession, but found the haughtiness with which he had behaved to Calcraft returned tenfold by the arrogance of that minion of fortune, who, to ensure Lord Granby's dependence and resignation, now lent him sixteen thousand pounds, additional, to a great debt already contracted. Lord Granby accordingly, on the 17th, resigned his post of Commander-in-Chief and Master of the Ordnance, retaining nothing but his regiment of Blue Guards. Lord Chatham was not less in the power of the usurer Calcraft—so low had those two men, who had sat at the top of the world, reduced themselves by their dissipations! Lord Granby's part was the weaker, as he recanted a vote he had not understood, for reasons he understood as little.

On the 15th, Lord Rockingham requiring to have

the Lords summoned for a motion he intended to make, the Duke of Grafton desired it might be postponed, and that the House would adjourn for a week; meaning, that the dismissal of the Chancellor would deprive them of a Speaker for some days. Lord Shelburne opposed the delay with much violence, and said the cause demanded accusation, as the Chancellor had been dismissed for a single vote; but no wretch would be found vile enough to accept the Seals in his room. This was thrown out to deter Yorke; and not a syllable of threat could be levelled at his timidity without effect.

After struggling with all the convulsions of ambition, interest, fear, honour, dread of abuse, and, above all, with the difficulty of refusing the object of his whole life's wishes, and with the despair of recovering the instant if once suffered to escape, Charles Yorke, having taken three days to consider, refused to accept the Seals of Chancellor. It saved some distress to the Ministers that Sir John Cust, Speaker of the Commons, being seized with a paralytic stroke, sent his resignation to the House, which adjourned to the 22nd, and gave time for making new arrangements, when so many parts of Government were unhinged. In no light was Sir John Cust a loss. His want of parts and spirit had been very prejudicial. He had no authority; and by his sufferance of Barré's, Burke's, and Saville's

insults, which he ought to have checked, had endangered the country itself. He died unlamented a few days after.¹

The wanton insolence of the Court on the first day's victory, was well nigh costing them a total defeat. They had dismissed the Chancellor without being provided with a successor. Mr. Conway acquainted me, in the greatest secrecy, that the Duke of Grafton, dismayed at Yorke's refusal of the Great Seal, would give up the Administration. Not a lawyer could be found able enough—or if able, bold enough—or if bold, decent enough—to fill the employment. Norton had all the requisites of knowledge and capacity, but wanted even the semblance of integrity, though for that reason, was probably the secret wish of the Court. He was enraged at the preference given to Yorke; yet nobody dared to propose him, even when Yorke had refused. Sir Eardley Wilmot had character and abilities, but wanted health. The Attorney-General, De Grey, wanted health and weight, and yet asked too extravagant terms. Dunning, the Solicitor-General, had taken the same part as his friends, Lord Camden and Lord Shelburne. Hussey, so far from being inclined to accept the office, determined to resign with his friend, Lord Camden,

¹ Sir John Cust died on the morning of the 22nd.—(See a more favourable account of him in a note to vol. i. p. 87.)—E.

though earnest against the dissolution of the Parliament. Of Lord Mansfield, there could be no question; when the post was dangerous, his cowardice was too well known to give hopes that he could be pressed to defend it. In this exigence, Grafton's courage was not more conspicuous. His first thought, without consulting the King's inclination, was to offer the Administration to Lord Chatham or Lord Rockingham; but inclining to the latter. He had desired Mr. Conway to come to him in the evening and meet Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, and Lord North, in the most private manner, for consultation. Conway went away in haste to Court, promising to return and dine with me, that he might consider what advice he would give to the Duke at night; but what was my astonishment, when, in two hours, Mr. Onslow came and told me that Mr. Yorke had accepted the Seals! He had been with the King over night (without the knowledge of the Duke of Grafton), and had again declined; but being pressed to reconsider, and returning in the morning, the King had so overwhelmed him with flatteries, entreaties, prayers, and at last with commands and threats, of never giving him the post if not accepted now, that the poor man sunk under the importunity, though he had given a solemn promise to his brother, Lord Hardwicke and Lord Rockingham, that he would not

catastrophe by declaring the accident natural, the want of evidence and of the testimony of surgeons to colour the tale given out, and which they never took any public method of authenticating, convinced everybody that he had fallen by his own hand—whether on his sword, or by a razor, was uncertain.

Yorke's speeches in Parliament had for some time, though not so soon as they ought, fallen into total disesteem. At the bar, his practice had declined from a habit of gluttony and intemperance, as I have mentioned. Yet, as a lawyer, his opinion had been in so high repute, that he was reported to have received an hundred thousand guineas in fees. In truth, his chief practice had flourished while his father was not only Lord Chancellor, but a very powerful Minister. Yorke's parts were by no means shining. His manner was precise and yet diffuse, and his matter more sententious than instructive. His conduct was timid, irresolute, often influenced by his profession, oftener by his interest. He sacrificed his character to his ambition of the Great Seal, and his life to his repentance of having attained it.

Two days after Yorke's death the Great Seal was put into commission in the hands of Baron Smythe and the Judges Aston and Bathurst. Sir Fletcher Norton had been made easy for the preference of Yorke, by the promise of the Speaker's chair—and

tained that the Marquis left the House directly;¹ and that Lord Hardwicke refused to hear his brother's excuses, and retiring from the room, shut himself into another chamber, obdurately denying Mr. Yorke an audience. At night it was whispered that the agitation of his mind, working on a most sanguine habit of body, inflamed of late by excessive indulgence both in meats and wine, had occasioned the bursting of a bloodvessel; and the attendance of surgeons was accounted for, by the necessity of bleeding him four times on Friday. Certain it is that he expired on the Saturday between four and six in the evening. His servants, in the first confusion, had dropped too much to leave it in the family's power to stifle the truth: and though they endeavoured to colour over the

¹ Very few days after the accident Mr. Edmund Burke came to me in extreme perturbation, and complained bitterly of the King, who, he said, had forced Mr. Yorke to disgrace himself. Lord Rockingham, he told me, was yet more affected at Mr. Yorke's misfortune, and would, as soon as he could, see Lord Hardwicke, make an account public, in which the King's unjustifiable behaviour should be exposed. I concluded from his agitation that they wanted to disculpate Lord Hardwicke and Lord Rockingham of having given occasion to Mr. Yorke's despair. They found it prudent, however, to say no more on the subject. An astonishing and indecent circumstance that followed not very long after that tragedy was, that Lord Hardwicke, whose reproaches had occasioned his brother's death, attached himself to the Court, against Lord Rockingham, and obtained bishopricks for another of his brothers!

There also remained vacant, the posts of Commander-in-Chief and Master of the Ordnance. Foreseeing that the latter, if not the former, would be offered to General Conway, fearing it would involve him deeper with the Court, and desirous that he should preserve his character of disinterestedness, I early begged him to accept neither, as it would not become him to profit of Lord Granby's spoils, with whom he had lived in friendship, and which would render him unpopular. He was overjoyed at hearing this opinion, as it was his own. Accordingly, when the King offered him the Ordnance, he desired to be excused, but offered to do the whole business of Master without taking the salary; adding, that if his Majesty would appoint no Master, he thought he could make advantageous improvements in the office. Lord Granby, too, would be less desperate, if he saw his posts not filled up. The King told Conway *he was a phenomenon; that there was no satisfying other people, but he would not take even what was offered to him*¹—but as it suited the King's views better to find men mercenary than disinterested, this virtue, as will appear, did not long make impression on him. He consented to

¹ Conway's disinterestedness did not on this, as on other occasions, obtain very general praise. It seems to have been expected that he would take the salary as soon as he decently could.—(Burke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 136.)—E.

Conway's plan, and told him at the same time that Lord Granby had been agitated even to tears when he resigned, and had told his Majesty that he did not mean opposition : that, indeed, in cases of state, he must follow Lord Chatham ; and Lord Camden in those of law. The King owned to Conway, that he had frightened Yorke into accepting the Seals by reproaching him with refusing to serve in that distress of Government, and by assuring him it was the last time the Seals should ever be offered to him.

Sir Jeffery Amherst, the most wrong-headed of men, would not hear of Yorke's peerage, unless his own was granted too. Mr. Conway showed him the necessity of a Chancellor's peerage, and that all who had promises of peerages had acquiesced. It did not satisfy him : he had resented Lord Camden's peerage before ; and now went into the King to resign—but was again pacified.

Conway himself was on the point of receiving a more real insult. The Duke of Grafton talked to him of destining the Mastership of the Ordnance to some great peer, not below him in the army. This pointed either at Lord Halifax or Lord Sandwich, neither of whom had ever served, but ranked as Lieutenant-Generals by having had commissions to raise regiments, which they never raised during the rebellion. Conway started, and declared firmly he

would resign if such a person should be put over him. I doubt, however, whether it would not have been tried, if greater troubles had not intervened. Both the Earls were poor and impatient: the Bedfords, who had now most weight with Grafton, favoured them—at least, preferred them to Conway. It was not thought safe to send so unpopular a man as Sandwich to Ireland. Thither Lord Gower wanted to dispatch Lord Hertford once more, that he might himself recover the Chamberlain's staff, the best introduction to personal familiarity with the King—but he could compass no one of his plans.

Lord Chatham had stooped in the meantime to visit Lord Rockingham; in consequence of which interview, and driven on by his friends who were ashamed of their attachment to a mute, the Marquis moved the Lords to go into the state of the nation; delivering his proposal with all the ungracious hesitation of terrified spirits, and hobbling through the grievances of the nation, which he imputed to the Court's design of governing by Ministers unwelcome to the people. Lord Chatham made one of his highest coloured orations, inflaming Lord Rockingham, whom he complimented largely, to pursue the recovery of the Constitution, and advising him to carry the pursuit even to extremes, the democratic part of the Constitution having been, he said, in-

tentionally oppressed. In his own wild and indigested manner he threw out, that the House of Commons, wanted alteration; and to deliver it from the influence of the Crown by the power of the latter over the rotten part, the venal boroughs and burgage-tenures, he should advise the addition of a third member for every county. With his usual versatility, and with more meaning, he chanted next the sacredness of prerogative, and thence blamed the Crown's yielding to bind itself not to recall the additional troops newly granted in Ireland thence, (by which concession alone that very requisite increase had been obtained); for himself, he declared he would never touch prerogative, he would not come near it, he would not pull a feather from that master-wing of the eagle. Of Corsica, he said, France had gained more in that pacific campaign than she had done in the most belligerent of the last war. He concluded with recommending union to the Opposition for the present purpose of redress of grievances. What might happen afterwards he did not know—an intimation that he had not been able to persuade Lord Rockingham to cede to Mr. Grenville his pretensions to the Treasury. The 25th was named for considering the state of the nation; but when the day came, Lord Rockingham moved to adjourn the debate for ten days, which was allowed. The motive was, Lord Chatham's having

the gout in his hand. This was the more indecent and absurd in that some of the Opposition had the very day before protested against adjourning that very question for a week till a new Chancellor could be chosen. Lord Sandwich ridiculed their not being able to go on without Lord Chatham—which, he might have added, was saying that *the little finger of Lord Chatham was heavier than the loins of the law.*

A more important officer was wanting than even a Chancellor. Mr. Conway had sent for me on the evening of the 22nd. It was to tell me that the Duke of Grafton had announced to him in the morning that he could not get a Chancellor; that his head turned, that he could not bear it, that he was determined to resign: that he should not have one great lawyer in the Cabinet to advise him; that Lord Mansfield had been pressed to accept it and had refused: that he could not fill up the empty places, so many persons had resigned. The posts of Chancellor, Privy Seal, Master of the Ordnance, Attorney and Solicitor to the Queen, a Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and two Lords of the Bedchamber, were vacant; that he had told his resolution to nobody but to Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, and Lord Jersey, and to his own two Secretaries, Stonhewer and Bradshaw. The two last, the Duke said, approved his resolution; Lord Jersey did not. Lord

Gower and Lord Weymouth had offered to stand against the storm with him, if he would venture. Conway had represented against the confusion into which his Grace would throw the kingdom — but in vain : he would hear no reasons. From the Duke Conway had gone to the King, whom he found in the utmost distress (or at least pretending to be), and persuaded that the Duke was inflexible, who, his Majesty said, had told him, his head turned. Conway hinted at trying Lord Rockingham, but the King said, he knew the disposition of Lord Rockingham and his friends, and would not hear of them. He was as thoroughly averse to Lord Chatham : both, he said, were engaged to dissolve the Parliament ; but he would abdicate his Crown sooner. “ Yes,” continued the King, laying his hand on his sword, “ I will have recourse to this sooner than yield to a dissolution.” He talked of trying to go on, if Lord North would put himself at the head of the Treasury. Conway left me to go again to the Duke, to whom he hinted at the want of spirit in not standing his ground ; but the resolution was too strongly taken, and he was deaf to all remonstrances.

The moment was indeed serious ; yet, had not the King been so thoroughly averse to the Opposition, he would not have found them obdurate. Burke owned to me that his friends would be content with-

out a dissolution, provided an Act of Parliament were passed to take from the House of Commons the power of incapacitation. The Duke of Richmond confessed the same to Mr. Conway. Lord Chatham was never inflexible towards prerogative; but the subservience of Lord North was more tempting; and on him the King fixed. Lord North owned to Conway that the King had pressed him to accept the Treasury, professed he did not desire it, but would undertake it rather than expose the country to confusion.

Whether Lord North's readiness to be his successor awakened the Duke of Grafton's jealousy, on the 25th his Grace talked of going on if the Attorney-General De Grey would accept the Great Seal, as the Duke expected he would. He told Conway that he was extremely pressed to fill up the vacancies; that Lord Sandwich teased him to be made Privy Seal, or Master of the Ordnance, since Mr. Conway would not take it. Conway, who had offered to give it up, to make Amherst easy, said, the King had consented he should remain Lieutenant-General of the Ordnance; and that, in any case, he would not act under a man of so bad a character as Sandwich, nor would see anybody else put over his head. He was glad, he said, to hear his Grace talk of continuing; for himself, he would take no part, unless his Grace remained. He had no objection to

Lord North, but had never had any connexion with him; for the Bedfords, he knew they were his enemies. The Duke made no reply; and Conway and I concluded the wayward fit was gone, as, to our knowledge, it had done so often before.

On January the 25th, the Commons went into a committee on the state of the nation, when Dowdeswell moved to resolve, that the House of Commons is bound to follow the laws of the land and the usage of Parliament, which is part thereof.¹ Conway said, this was a very needless declaration; it was a truism, and admitted by everybody; the House might as well vote that Magna Charta was the law of the land; but he supposed this was meant as a foundation for other questions, and therefore he called on Dowdeswell's candour to state what he intended should follow. Dowdeswell refused; and therefore Lord North said, as he supposed the motion alluded to the case of Wilkes, he would add the words "and had been so followed in the case of the late election for the county of Middlesex." Grenville said this was unfair; and that, in a complicated question, any member had a right to separate the parts, and call for each distinctly. Conway replied, that he had known questions made complicated on purpose to destroy them; and re-

¹ If the report in Cavendish (vol. i. p. 458) be correct, the motion was made on the 16th of February.—E.

mined Grenville of Dr. Hay's and Wedderburne's long and absurd addition to the question on general warrants, which did destroy that question. Wedderburne said, if the motion was a truism, was that a reason for not allowing it? Would any man begin to refuse paying a bill, by denying that two and two make four? He went into the law part of the question; and his position that there had been no question exactly in point, made great impression on the House, no man being a more acute or more accurate speaker. Young Charles Fox, of age but the day before, started up, and entirely confuted Wedderburne, even in law, producing a case decided in the courts below but the last year, and exactly similar to that of Wilkes. "The court," he said, "had had no precedent, but had gone on analogy." The House roared with applause. Sir W. Meredith said rudely, he wished Mr. Conway acted then with the same patriotic spirit that he had shown on general warrants, when he had gained the hearts of the nation. Conway replied with fire that he hoped his character was as good as ever, or as that gentleman's. Had nobody any integrity but those who called themselves patriots? Lord Coke, the oracle of the law, quoted the case of Hall, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, and called it *the ancient usage of Parliament*. Selden and Maynard held the same doctrine. Who would dare to affirm, that those

were not the greatest constitutional lawyers? What was set against them but two or three pamphlets (meaning those written by Dowdeswell and Meredith), ingenious, indeed, but were they of weight to be opposed to Coke, Selden, and Maynard? Sir William Meredith was unlucky in addressing his censure to Conway, who was in reality what Sir William wished or affected to be, a most conscientious man. Conway's virtue was firm, and not to be shaken by interest or caprice. He persisted in uniform integrity, supported the Court when he thought it in the right, but disdained its temptations. He sometimes fluctuated and refined too minutely; but if he yielded to his scruples, they never were infused by a glimpse of self-advantage. Sir William was not long after this gained to the Court by a White Stick; and though he again relinquished it, as he said, on principle, he lost more on the side of judgment than he recovered on that of conscience; and left it more doubtful whether he was an upright than a very unsettled man. In an age wherein honesty could boast few genuine martyrs, Conway was certainly the most distinguished. He never ceased to attest his attachment to virtue, at the risk of a most precarious fortune; and he had one merit that added to the beauty of his character, and in which he was singular, that he never mixed party or faction with his line of conduct.

The Duke of Richmond, Sir George Saville, and Lord John Cavendish, were, undoubtedly, of as unblemished virtue as Conway; but they had all three independent fortunes, and had no opportunities of making equal sacrifices. All three, too, were devoted to their party, and from that point of honour, which did little to their judgment, remained inflexibly attached to that poor creature, Lord Rockingham. The debate, whence I have digressed, lasted till three in the morning, when Lord North's amendment was carried but by 224 to 180—a threatening diminution to the Administration, who saw their majority on the first day of the session sunk from 116 to 44.

If the Duke of Grafton was alarmed before, his panic was augmented by this decrease of forces. He again declared to the King he would resign, yet still desired his friends to keep the secret.

The next day Mr. Conway related to me two extraordinary conversations that he had had,—the first with the Duke himself, the other with his secretary, Stonhewer. Conway had again tried to encourage the Duke to be firm and surmount his dejection; bidding him beware that there were no Treasury secrets that might endanger him. The Duke broke out, said he was determined to resign immediately, for—*he was betrayed*. “There is no man, Mr. Conway,” continued he, “on whom I can

depend but you." Conway was amazed. "No," continued the Duke, "there is no dependence on connections. I am betrayed by my own confidential secretary, Bradshaw. I will go to Lord North, and press him to accept directly." Farther, he would not open himself. From the Duke, Conway went to Stonhewer. The latter was a modest man of perfect integrity, invariably attached to Grafton from his childhood.¹ He having approved the Duke's intention of resigning, it was probably from being but too well acquainted with his patron's unfitness for the first post in the State, or from having silently observed how dangerous it was for the Duke to remain in so responsible an employment, surrounded by traitors. Stonhewer told Conway that the Bedfords had taken little or no pains to persuade the Duke to retain his power. They had made him believe, through Bradshaw, through whom the negotiation passed, that the Attorney-General was more averse to take the Seals than the Duke found him—and Stonhewer owned that he thought Bradshaw a villain. The King, he said,

¹ Mr. Stonehewer's name has been handed down to posterity by his friendship with the poet Gray, who owed to his interest with the Duke of Grafton the appointment of Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge. Many letters to him are to be found in Gray's works. He long held the post of a Commissioner of Excise. He died a bachelor, leaving a considerable fortune to his nephew, who took his name.—E.

and when he was but thirty-four years of age. His fall was universally ascribed to his pusillanimity ; but whether betrayed by his fears or his friends, he had certainly been the chief author of his own disgrace. His haughtiness, indolence, reserve, and improvidence, had conjured up the storm ; but his obstinacy and fickleness always relaying each other, and always *mal à propos*, were the radical causes of all the numerous absurdities that discoloured his conduct and exposed him to deserved reproaches ; nor had he a depth of understanding to counter-balance the defects of his temper. The power of the Crown and the weakness of the Opposition, would have maintained him in his post, though he was unfit for it, as immediately appeared by the Court's recovering its ascendant the moment the Duke retired ; for though Lord North had far better parts, yet his indolence proved as great as Grafton's ; but having as much good humour as the Duke wanted, it was plain that the Parliament were willing to be slaves, provided they could be treated with decency. Grafton had quitted the King's service, when Prince, disgusted with Lord Bute : had been captivated by Lord Chatham, yet came into place without him ; then quitted for him, Lord Rockingham and the Whigs. He then declared against a place of business ; then gave himself up to Lord Chatham, and was made his first Lord of

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which yet he might have surmounted, if his inconstancy had been art, his rashness courage, or his obstinacy firmness.

He was the fourth Prime Minister in seven years who fell by his own fault. Lord Bute was seized with a panic and ran away from his own victory. Grenville was undone by his insolence, by joining in the insult on the Princess, and by his persecution of Lord Bute and Mackenzie. Lord Rockingham's incapacity overturned him; and now the Duke of Grafton, by a complication of passions and defect of system, destroyed a power that it had depended on himself to make as permanent as he could desire. It was pretended that his secret reason was the preference given by the Queen to Lord Waldegrave for her Master of Horse over the Duke's friend, Lord Jersey. The Duke had not asked it for him, but was capable of resenting its not being offered, and as capable of being influenced by that little reason as by any of eminent magnitude.¹ He

&c.; and he had no reason to doubt, and yet submitted to, that secret influence. Bradshaw was certainly the Earl's creature, though the Duke did not then know it; but it is not probable that a pension to Dyson would have been added to the Duke's last disposition, had Dyson not been admitted to his Grace's confidence. Of Dyson's attachment to Lord Bute the Duke was assured by Dyson's being saved by the King when the Duke and Lord Rockingham came into Administration together.—(See *infra*.)

¹ The Duke of Grafton's motives for resigning were no doubt

the Treasury; grew as violently partial to Mr. Conway, yet was with difficulty persuaded to stay in place even with him—then would act with nobody but him: as abruptly and lightly consented to let him retire to make way for the Bedfords; and after a life of early decorum, dipped with every indecency into the most public and abject attachment to a common courtesan, gave himself up to Lord Bute's influence:¹ rushed into an alliance with the Bedford's, whom he hated, against his interest; and at last permitted them to betray him, not without suspecting, but without resenting it.

The detail of his conduct was as weak and preposterous as the great lines of it. His intrusion of Lutterell, his neglecting to call the Parliament before the petitions spread, his wasting his time at Euston and Newmarket though the tempest raged, his disgusting the Chancellor, and when he had disgusted him, not turning him out before the Parliament met, but leaving him to avail himself of the merit of martyrdom by being turned out for his speech and vote; and then turning him out when it was both too late and too soon, because no successor had been prepared in time; these wild and inconsistent steps plunged him into difficulties

¹ The Duke probably had no direct connection with Lord Bute, but had every reason to believe that the latter still enjoyed the King's confidence—at least, through his tools, Jenkinson, Dyson,

which yet he might have surmounted, if his inconstancy had been art, his rashness courage, or his obstinacy firmness.

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did not quit without signalizing his retreat by two pensions that were loudly censured. One was to his tool, the traitor Bradshaw, the reversion of Auditor of the Plantations, worth 1500*l.* a-year. The other a pension on Ireland of 1000*l.* for Dyson stamped with a royal breach of promise; the King having permitted the Duke of Northumberland to pass the regal word that no more pensions for a term of years should be granted on Ireland but of a mixed character. His own statement of them will be found in the Appendix. It is easy to believe that he had for some time been anxious to be released from a position which could not be otherwise than most painful to a man of honour. The business of the Government, always onerous to a chief not used to much application, nor having served any apprenticeship in subordinate offices, was made particularly irksome to him by his being left without a single colleague in the great departments of the State whom he could call his friend. On the leading questions of public policy, he often found himself in a minority. His proposition for the immediate repeal of all the American import duties was rejected by the casting vote of Lord Rochford, whom he had himself recently introduced into the Cabinet. Lord North and the Bedford party, by superior attention to the details of business, had also drawn the management of affairs into their hands; and, at the same time, ingratiated themselves with the King, so that the Duke received no support from his Majesty against them, and was subjected to mortifications, which must have been most trying to his irritable temper. It was only after much persuasion that he could be induced to accept the Treasury; he regarded his acceptance as a concession to his political friends and to the King; and, finding himself now virtually deserted by both, it is not surprising that he should seek to divest himself of a character which had ceased to be even respectable. No doubt he committed a

on extraordinary occasions.¹ Dyson's merits were not of that noisy kind that would bear to be detailed, and yet now ranked with those of Prince Ferdinand and Sir Edward Hawke, whose names had been cited by the Attorney-General as proper precedents for his Majesty's munificence.

serious blunder in withholding from the public the real grounds of his resignation. It has, irreparably, damaged his name with posterity. He was by no means the insignificant or worthless personage that he appears in the pages of Walpole and of Junius. That he had talents is proved by the single fact of his being able during, at least, one session to resist the whole force of the Opposition in the Lords with no assistance, except from Lord Camden. There is a letter from Mr. Fox among the Grafton MSS. saying, that there is no public man whom he should prefer as a Leader. The spirit with which he entered the lists with Lord Chatham betrayed no want of courage. His political principles were those of the Revolution; and where he departed from them, it was from an error of judgment rather than of intention. A genuine love of peace, and hatred of oppression, either civil or religious, marked the whole of his public life; and, great as were the errors which Walpole and Junius have justly denounced in his private conduct, it is only just to state that, from the date of these memoirs to his death, which comprises a period of near forty years, there were few individuals more highly and generally esteemed.—E.

¹ Mr. Dyson's pension was taken away by a resolution of the Irish House of Commons, on the 25th of November 1771, by a majority of *one*.—E.

the failure of numbers had disclosed itself. A new arrangement without new strength was not encouraging. Lord North had neither connections with the nobility, nor popularity with the country, yet he undertook the government in a manly style, and was appointed First Lord of the Treasury on the 29th, with only one day to intervene before it would be decided whether he would stand or fall. Could he depend on men whom he had not time to canvass? Was it not probable that the most venal would hang off till they should see to which side the scale would incline? Yet Lord North plunged boldly into the danger at once. A more critical day had seldom dawned. If the Court should be beaten, the King would be at the mercy of the Opposition, or driven to have recourse to the Lords—possibly to the sword. All the resolutions on the Middlesex election would be rescinded, the Parliament dissolved, or the contest reduced to the sole question of prerogative. Yet in the short interval allowed, Lord North, Lord Sandwich, Rigby, and that faction on one side, the Scotch and the Butists on the other hand, had been so active, and had acted so differently from what the Duke of Grafton had done, that at past twelve at night the Court proved victorious by a majority of forty; small in truth, but greater by fifteen or twenty than was expected by the most

sanguine, the numbers being 226 to 186.¹ The question in effect was, that a person eligible by law cannot by expulsion be rendered incapable of being rechosen, unless by act of parliament. The courtiers moved that the chairman should leave the chair, and carried it. Lord North, with great frankness and spirit, laid open his own situation, which, he said, he had not sought, but would not refuse; nor would he timidly shrink from his post. He was rudely treated by Colonel Barré, who already softened towards the Duke of Grafton, to whom he attributed weight and dignity, but expressing contempt for the new Premier, as a man of no consequence. The latter replied not only with spirit but good-humour, and evidently had the advantage, though it was obvious how much weight the personal presence of a First Minister in the House of Commons carried with it. George Grenville amazed everybody by a bitter complaint of libels and libellers hired by the Court; and this at a season when, deserve what it might, the Court undoubtedly laboured under an unparalleled load of abuse. Colonel Lutterell, on the other hand,

¹ The following is the King's note to Lord North on the following morning:—"1st. Feb. 1770—A majority of forty on the old ground, at least ten times before, is a very favourable auspice on your taking a lead in Administration. A little spirit will soon restore order in my service. I am glad to find Sir Gilbert Elliot has again spoke."—(MS.)—E.

affirmed that he had traced a most flagrant libel home to a near relation of that gentleman, who, he believed, was also privy to it. He had forced the printer to divulge the writer, one Lloyd,¹ who had confessed on his knees, with tears, that Lord Temple had forced him to practise that office. Lutterell added that he had taxed Lord Temple with it by letter, who had not deigned to make an answer. Captain Walsingham said he had gone to Lord Temple on the same errand, who had declared on his honour he was not concerned in it. Grenville flamed, and called for a committee to inquire into libels. He was answered finely by Sir Gilbert Elliot, who now, contrary to his custom of late, took a warm part. He had been much neglected by Grafton, though the confidential agent of the King and Lord Bute; and never distinguished himself, though none more able, but on cases of emergency, and when the Court ventured or chose to make its mind more known than by the Minister. Elliot told Grenville that, had he not entered into factious combinations, *he* knew Grenville would have been entreated to save his country. That Grenville was not pardoned and again received into favour, proved how much more

¹ I presume that there were more than one of this name who had been thus discreditably employed by the Grenvilles. One had already obtained the Deanery of Norwich (vol. ii. p. 6).—E.

the King and his mother were swayed by their passions than by their interest.¹

Frederic Lord North, eldest son of the Earl of Guilford, was now in the thirty-eighth year of his age. Nothing could be more coarse or clumsy or ungracious than his outside. Two large prominent eyes that rolled about to no purpose (for he was utterly short-sighted), a wide mouth, thick lips, and inflated visage, gave him the air of a blind trumpeter. A deep untuneable voice, which, instead of modulating, he enforced with unnecessary pomp, a total neglect of his person, and ignorance of every civil attention,² disgusted all who judge

¹ When the Government was formed, Sir Gilbert Elliot had said to Lord North that he wished Mr. Grenville could have been included. "Lord North agreed, but said it was impossible."—(Elliot's MS. Journal.)—E.

² Lord North was so careless of answering letters, that he made enemies of the Dukes of Marlborough and Bridgewater by that neglect. His behaviour to the Duke of Gloucester amounted to brutality and want of feeling. In the subsequent breach between the King and his Royal Highness, the latter wrote a letter to his Majesty, begging a provision for his wife and children, and sent the letter by Lord North. The latter received the King's answer on Friday night, but choosing to go the next morning to Bushy Park for two days for his amusement, though he could not but be sensible of the Duke's anxiety at such a moment, and which would be increased by knowing the answer was given, Lord North only sent the Duke word on the Friday night that he had got the King's answer, and would bring it to his Royal Highness on the following Monday. There was mean insolence,

by appearance, or withhold their approbation till it is courted. But within that rude casket were enclosed many useful talents. He had much wit, good-humour, strong natural sense, assurance, and promptness, both of conception and elocution. His ambition had seemed to aspire to the height, yet he was not very ambitious. He was thought interested, yet was not avaricious. What he did, he did without a mask, and was not delicate in choosing his means.¹ He had lent himself readily to all the violences of Mr. Grenville against Wilkes, had seized the moment of advancement by accepting the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer (after a very short opposition) when the Court wanted a person to oppose to the same Mr. Grenville; and with equal alacrity had served under the Duke

too, in the disrespect, as the Duke could not but feel that Lord North would not have treated him so rudely if his Royal Highness had not been in disgrace.

¹ At one of the Councils held to consider what steps should be taken against Wilkes, when the Duke of Grafton was Minister and Lord North Chancellor of the Exchequer, and some were for violence and some for moderation, Lord North said not a word. At last Lord Camden, Lord Chancellor, asked him why he did not give his opinion? Lord North answered that he had been waiting for their Lordships' determination, being perfectly indifferent what resolution they should take, as he was ready to adopt whatever plan they should fix on. Lord Camden was so shocked at that profligacy that he left the room. This account I received from Lord Camden.

of Grafton. When the first post became vacant by the Duke's strange retreat, no man so ready to place himself in the gap as Lord North. It was in truth worth his ambition, though he should rule but a day, to attain the rank of Prime Minister. He had knowledge, and though fond of his amusement, seemed to have all necessary activity till he reached the summit. Yet that industry ceased when it became most requisite. He had neither system, nor principles, nor shame; sought neither the favour of the Crown or of the people, but enjoyed the good luck of fortune with a gluttonous epicurism that was equally careless of glory and disgrace.¹ His indolence prevented his

¹ On the death of Lord Holderness, Warden of the Cinque Ports, in 1778, the Duke of Dorset expected to succeed, having applied to Lord North previously for his interest, who gave the Duke his word he would not be his competitor; yet the post was conferred on Lord North himself. The Duke asked an audience of the King, and complained of this breach of promise. The King said Lord North had not broken any promise, for the place had been given to him without his asking it. A man of scrupulous honour would not have been contented with that evasion even if he had said, "I will not *ask* for the place." He must have known that the Duke could understand nothing but that he would not be the person to intercept the office. A refusal of his interest would have been honest; to have asked for the place, notwithstanding he had promised he would not, would have been a brave defiance of honesty; to take it after that promise was dirty, and unwise, too, for he offended the Duke more by that evasion than he would have done by refusing to assist him in obtaining

forming any plan. His indifference made him leap from one extreme to another; and his insensibility to reproach reconciled him to any contradiction. He proved as indolent as the Duke of Grafton, but his temper being as good as the Duke's was bad, he was less hurt at capital disgraces than the Duke had been at trifling difficulties. Lord North's conduct in the American war displayed all these features. He engaged in it against his opinion, and yet without reluctance. He managed it without foresight or address, and was neither ashamed when it miscarried, nor dispirited when the Crown itself became endangered by the additional war with France. His good humour could not be good nature, for at the beginning of the war he stuck at no cruelty, but laughed at barbarities with which all Europe rung. It could not be good sense, for in the pro-

the post. No Minister is bound to promise all that is asked, but every Minister is obliged to act like a gentleman, and not like an attorney or a Jesuit. [It is probable that Lord North had reason to believe that his refusal of the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports would not be the means of securing that office for the Duke of Dorset. It is certain that no Minister ever held his high post with a personal character more unblemished. In the letters occasionally cited in these notes, the King often contrasts Lord North's disinterestedness with the very different conduct which his Majesty had witnessed in some of his other servants. Lord North was far from wealthy,—a circumstance which the King had discovered, and hence his Majesty earnestly sought an opportunity of making a permanent provision for him.—E.]

gress he blushed at none of the mischiefs he had occasioned, at none of the reproaches he had incurred. Like the Duke of Grafton, he was always affecting a disposition to retire, yet never did.¹ Unlike the Duke, who secured no emoluments to himself, Lord North engrossed whatever fell in his way, and sometimes was bribed² by the Crown to promote Acts, against which he pretended his conscience recoiled—but it never was delicate when profit was in the opposite scale. If he had ambition, it was of very mean complexion, for he stooped to be but a nominal Prime Minister, and suffered the King's private junto to enjoy the whole credit of favour, while, between submission and laziness, Lord North himself was seldom the author of the measures in which he bore the principal part. This passive and inglorious tractability, and his being connected with no faction, made him welcome to the King:

¹ If Walpole had been aware of the correspondence that passed between the King and Lord North to which I have occasionally referred, he would not have made this remark. Nothing but the entreaties of the King could have prevailed on Lord North to remain in office as long as he did. His applications for permission to resign were frequent and most urgent.—E.

² The Royal Marriage Act was drawn by Lord Mansfield, and was so much against Lord North's opinion, that he declared he would not support it—yet he did. It was reported that he was bribed by a grant of part of the Savoy, which about that time the Crown intended to sell—but that was never proved [nor believed by any impartial person.—(See the note in p. 81 *supra*.—E.)

his having no predominant fault or vice recommended him to the nation, and his good humour and wit to everybody but to the few whom his want of good breeding and attention offended. One singularity came out in his character, which was, that no man was more ready for extremes under the administration of others, no man more temperate than Lord North during his own:—in effect, he was a man whom few hated, fewer could esteem. As a Minister he had no foresight, no consistence, no firmness, no spirit. He miscarried in all he undertook in America, was more improvident than unfortunate, less unfortunate than he deserved to be. If he was free from vices, he was as void of virtues; and it is a paltry eulogium of a Prime Minister of a great country, yet the best that can be allotted to Lord North, that, though his country was ruined under his administration, he preserved his good humour, and neither felt for his country nor for himself. Yet it is true, too, that he was the least odious of the Ministers with whom he acted; and though servile in obedience to a Prince who meant so ill, there was reason to think that Lord North neither stimulated, nor was more than the passive instrument of the black designs of the Court.

The other chief Ministers were, Lord Dartmouth, Lord Suffolk, Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, Lord

Sandwich, Lord Rochford, and afterwards Lord George Germaine, besides two, who, though not ostensible Ministers, had more weight with the King than Lord North himself. Of those, Lord Dartmouth only stayed long enough to prostitute his character and authenticate his hypocrisy. The Chancellor, Bathurst, was too poor a creature to have any weight; and Lord Rochford, though more employed, had still less claim to sense, and none at all to knowledge. Lord Suffolk's soul was harrowed by ambition, and as he had not parts to gratify it, he sought the despotism of the Crown as means of gratifying his own pride. Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, and Lord Sandwich, all had parts, and never used them to any good or creditable purpose. The first had spirit enough to attempt any crime; the other two, though notorious cowards, were equally fitted to serve a prosperous Court; and Sandwich had a predilection to guilt if he could couple it with artifice and treachery. Lord George Germaine was proud, haughty, and desperate. Success by any means was necessary to restore his credit; and a Court that was capable of adopting him, was sure he would not boggle at anything to maintain himself. Lord Mansfield was by birth, education, principle, cowardice, and revenge for the public odium, a bigot to tyranny. He would have sacrificed the universe, and everything but his per-

sonal safety, to overturn the constitution and freedom of England. But in the blindness of that rage, and from not daring to open the attempt where the danger to himself would have been imminent, he was the author of the liberty of America, and the instrument of Providence to bless a whole continent, whose destruction he sought to involve with that of his country. Jenkinson had, and deserved, no marked character; he was the tool of the King and Lord Mansfield, and had just parts enough to make his servility inexcusable. Wedderburne, Sir Gilbert Elliot, and Dyson were also much implicated in the following counsels; but the two latter died early in the American war. Thurlow, Rigby, and Ellis bore their part in kindling that fatal flame—but I am anticipating what did not appear till three or four years later—though it was both necessary to specify the chief incendiaries of the ensuing calamities, and to account for Lord North's escaping capital hatred for seeming to bear so capital a part in so criminal a scene; but as not one of the set I have recapitulated had recommended himself to the favour of the public, Lord North, by his good humour, easily drew most good will to himself, and did not, like most of the rest, push it from him by insolence and avowed profligacy. Many events intervened, before the grand scene opened, and those I must now detail.

From Lord North's entrance into power, the Court found all their facilities of governing by corruption and influence return. Every question was carried in both Houses by more than sufficient majorities: and though the Ministers were teased within, and the King from without, Lord Chatham was always baffled in the Lords, Dowdeswell, Burke, and Grenville in the Commons; nor could Wilkes in the City keep up more than an ineffectual flame. I will recapitulate, as briefly as I can, the chief events and debates of the following period.

Lorth North was no sooner set at the head of affairs, than he solicited General Conway's support. The latter professed great regard for him, but declared he would not sit in council with Lord Gower and Lord Sandwich, now the Duke of Grafton, to whom alone he had been obliged, was retired. Conway, accordingly, with the King's consent, returned no more to the Cabinet Council. The Privy Seal was given to Lord North's uncle, the Earl of Halifax. Charles Fox and Charles Townshend,¹ of Hunningham, were made Commissioners, the first of the Admiralty, the second of the Treasury. Ellis²

¹ Son of William Townshend, third son of Charles Viscount Townshend, Knight of the Garter. This Charles Townshend, who must not be confounded with his cousin, the famous Charles, had been employed in Spain, and was distinguished by the appellation of the Spanish Charles.

² Welbore Ellis, afterwards Lord Mendip, and often mentioned in these Memoirs.—E.

succeeded James Grenville as Vice-Treasurer of Ireland; but Lord Howe and Lord Cornwallis resigned their places, having, as they said, had no obligations but to Lord Chatham and the Duke of Grafton. Dr. Blackstone was made a judge, and Sir Gilbert Elliot succeeded Lord Howe as Treasurer of the Navy.¹

On the 2nd of February, the Lords went into the state of the nation, on a question like Dowdeswell's, and sat till two in the morning, an hour scarce ever known in that House. The Duke of Richmond principally shone, and said he concluded the Duke of Grafton had resigned from being conscious of the badness of the cause. Grafton denied the supposition; said, nobody did or ever should know the cause of his resignation—and then entered into the most vehement protestation of eternal attachment to his friends the Bedfords. Lord Shelburne and Lord Sandwich had a warm altercation; but the most disagreeable part of the

¹ The following entry occurs in Sir Gilbert's MS. Journal:—"Friday, 3rd February. Went to Court; heard that Lord Howe had resigned. Lord North made me the offer of the Treasurership of the Navy; said the King wished I might accept, as many persons were doubtful. Though hazardous, I did accept on the spot." The mode in which the offer is made and accepted, raises a presumption against the existence of the intimate confidence which the King was believed by Walpole to place in Sir Gilbert Elliot.—E.

day fell on the late Chancellor, Camden. Grafton, Gower, and Weymouth declared, on their honours, that he had never objected to the legality of what had been done on the Middlesex election; and the Duke affirmed that he had not suspected Lord Camden's doubts till the month of August last. All Lord Camden could say was, that he had never been positively consulted on it, and had not thought himself obliged to give any opinion when not called upon; yet it appeared in the debate from Lord Chatham, that Lord Camden had declared the illegality to him before August—a proceeding not quite justifiable in a Chancellor, who is styled keeper of the King's conscience, to be silent to the Ministers on so important a step, and to condemn their measures to the chief of their opponents. The motion was rejected by 96 to 47, and then the majority voted, that for the House of Lords to interfere in a resolution of the House of Commons in a matter of election would be unconstitutional, and tend to a breach between the two Houses. Two warm protests were signed on that occasion by the Lords in opposition, declaring they would never rest till the nation should obtain satisfaction on the Middlesex election.¹

¹ A brief report of this interesting debate is given in Sir Gilbert Elliot's MS. Journal. "The Duke of Grafton, who spoke with great gravity and weight, said, as he had before declared,

On voting the land tax, Burke complained of the new grants of pensions and reversions, and of the hardship of levying three shillings in the pound for such purposes. Lord North defended them by the precedent of Lord Camden's pension. Dowdeswell named Dyson and Bradshaw as enjoying monstrous and exorbitant grants, and gave notice they should be inquired into. James Townshend, the Sheriff, declared that as the county of Middlesex was not fairly represented, he would not pay the land tax. Lord North answered calmly, that the law would decide whether he should pay it or not. The declaration, though intended for example, was not followed: but the Commons House of Assembly of

that it had been less likely to occur to *him* to apply to the Chancellor; persuaded he was right, he was not solicitous about more advice; but did it become a friend with the Great Seal in his hand to suffer a friend, he all the while silent, to involve the Administration in what he deemed an illegal act?" On Lord Chatham saying that the Chancellor had early told him his opinion, Lord Weymouth expressed astonishment that the Chancellor should communicate to a private man at Hayes what he had concealed from the Cabinet. The Chancellor was certainly to blame in not earlier resigning his office, since he was determined to go into opposition the moment Lord Chatham appeared; but his health making that event doubtful, possibly led the Chancellor into a conduct generally censured, and which had greatly obstructed the affairs of Government."—(See also Lord Brougham's remarks on this transaction in "Statesmen of the Time of George the Third," vol. iii. p. 171.)—E.

South Carolina, voted 1500*l*. to the Supporters of the Bill of Rights.

On the 12th, Lord Chatham moved for a resolution that the capacity of a person to be elected did not depend finally on a determination of the House of Commons. This was supported by Lord Camden, but denied by Lord Mansfield, and evaded by the previous question.

Dowdeswell the same day aimed a destructive blow at the prerogative, but one too wholesome to meet with success.¹ It was to take away votes at elections for Members of Parliament from all under-officers of the revenue, as of the excise, customs, &c. The motion was popular and constitutional; but the old-artillery of the Court, the Tories, were played against the proposal, and it was rejected by 263 against 188. Dowdeswell and Grenville pledged themselves to promote such a bill, should they ever be Ministers again. Lord North told them they certainly did not think themselves likely

¹ The enormous increase of the national debt having occasioned a prodigious number of new taxes, the augmentation of officers to levy those duties, had been a very principal cause of extending the influence of the Crown, by the vast number of votes it necessarily commanded in all the great commercial towns and ports. Such a bill as this here mentioned was warmly contended for in 1781, and actually was obtained in 1782 on the change of the Administration.

to become so, when they supported such a measure.¹

On the report from the committee on the state of the nation, a great quarrel happened between the new Speaker and Sir William Meredith, who were ancient enemies. Grenville had insisted on a right of separating two questions, which being contested, Meredith appealed to the Speaker. Sir Fletcher, a novice in the orders of the House, made an artful but false distinction; at the same time complaining of the hardship of being pressed for decision in the dawn of his office. Sir William said he had meant nothing uncandid; but Norton, hot and unguarded, said, "he now saw he must never expect candour from that gentleman." Those words caused such an uproar for twenty minutes that nobody could be heard, most crying out to have the words taken down. Conway and others tried to moderate; but Barré inflamed the heat, and Dowdeswell moved that the Speaker's behaviour had been an infringement of the liberty of debate, and a violation of the rules of the House. The Speaker was enraged, and perceiving that so violent a motion would be rejected with indignation, he insisted on putting the question on himself, which was thrown out without a division. The whole discussion lasted between four and five

¹ This debate is reported by Cavendish, vol. i. p. 443. Mr. Grenville's speech contains much curious information.—E.

hours, protracted by the Speaker's fault, who would make no concession, and who desired the House to take notice that he had made no apology to Meredith.¹

A motion of Grenville for an account of the disbursements on the Civil List for the year 1769 was rejected by 262 to 165. Many reflections were thrown out on the new grants to Sir Fletcher Norton, Dyson, and Bradshaw; but as the majority was again risen to ninety-seven, the Court paid no regard to complaints. Lord North had flung himself into the hands of Lord Bute's junto,² and had even taken for his own private secretary one Robinson, steward to Sir James Lowther³—not without

¹ The Speaker certainly exhibited great want of temper and judgment on the occasion.—(See the details in Cavendish, vol. i. p. 461.)—E.

² This is a remarkable coincidence, and nothing more. It was from no good will to Sir James Lowther that Mr. Robinson received this appointment, for Sir James's name seldom occurs in the King's letters to Lord North without some harsh or condemnatory expression; besides, the King says of him, even in 1779, "he is scarce worth gaining." Mr. Robinson was long in the King's confidence, and employed in the most secret affairs. He represented Harwich for many years, and realized a considerable fortune in office. His only daughter married Lord Abergavenny.—E.

³ The confidence placed by Lord North in Sir Gilbert Elliot strengthened this suspicion, but the entries in Sir Gilbert's MS. Journal furnish strong internal evidence that Lord Bute took little or no part in public affairs at this time. An event of such

giving offence to the Bedfords, who had meant to govern North themselves.

But if Lord North established his credit at Court by recurring to the patronage of the Favourite, it did but serve to revive jealousies of Lord Bute and the Princess; a strong instance of which broke forth. Sir Edward Hawke had declared for an addition of four thousand seamen, then retracted that opinion, but said, if he should remain in the Admiralty,¹ he should the next year be for adding five thousand men. On this declaration of so renowned an Admiral, Lord Craven and Lord Abingdon moved for two thousand seamen more. The Duke of Richmond supported their motion with great abilities, knowledge, and matter, and pointed out the encroachments and dangers from France and Spain in Corsica and the East Indies, and from the formidable Spanish fleet that seemed to threaten Jamaica, warning the Ministers that they should be answerable for refusing more seamen, if any mischief should arise. Still they refused them, but with much confusion and little argument. Lord Chatham went farther, in his best manner and with most inflammatory matter, perceiving how little he could hope

importance as the Duke of Grafton's intended resignation is not communicated to Lord Bute until six days after it had been known to Sir Gilbert, and then only through Lady Bute.—E.

¹ He was First Lord.

either from the King or Parliament. He pronounced that since the King's accession there had been no *original* Minister (a forced expression for no *independent* Minister) in this country; that there was a *secret influence* (which he described so as to point at the Princess, not at Lord Bute) which governed and impeded everything, and was greater than the King. He drew a flattering yet artfully ridiculous picture of the King's gracious facility in granting everything in his closet, while in Council or in Parliament it was defeated by the faction of the secret influence. He himself, he said, had been duped and deceived by it; and though it was a hard thing to say of himself, confessed he had been a fool and a changeling. The Duke of Grafton, mistaking Lord Chatham, asked whether the King or himself had been pointed at by the Earl, and spoke with warmth, dignity, and grace. He declared Lord Chatham had forced him into Administration, as he had many letters to prove; but the happiest day of his life had been that of his resignation. For the words dropped by Lord Chatham, *they were the effects of a distempered mind brooding over its own discontents*.¹ This last expression hurt Lord Chatham deeply: he repeated it over and over, and said he had drawers full of papers to prove that he had

¹ See a brief report in Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. p. 846.
—E.

always had sufficient vigour of mind to avoid the snares laid for him. He would neither retract, he said, nor explain away the words he had uttered; but returned the Duke's attack with severe reflections on his Grace's falsehood and deviations. The Ministers did not dare to take notice of what had been thrown out against the Princess, but rejected the motion by 70 to 38. The Duke of Richmond hinted that in the late war the Emperor of Morocco had offered to embark fifty thousand men on board Admiral Saunders's fleet, and invade Spain. Lord Rockingham, the Duke of Richmond, and the Cavendishes, who had kept aloof from Lord Chatham, were so charmed with his attack on the Princess, that they visited him publicly. It was more surprising that the Duke of Grafton supported the new Administration with more parts and spirit than he had done his own; and in that and the following winter recovered much of the esteem that he had lost when in power, though without having recourse to that usual restorative of character, opposition.

On the 5th of March the House of Commons went upon the consideration of America. Lord North proposed to repeal all the late duties, but that on tea. *Mr. Conway advised the repeal of that also*, most men believing that a partial repeal would produce no content. Grenville agreed in condemn-

ing, as the Rockingham party did too, a partial repeal; but, too obstinate to consent to any repeal, went away without voting, and the motion passed. Lord North produced letters showing that the association for not taking our goods was in a great measure broken through, as the Colonies found they could not do without them. In fact, they continued secretly to send commissioners hither for goods while they appeared most vehement against letting them be imported—the true reason why our merchants did not, as having no cause, complain of the decay of that trade.¹

To find the petitions slighted, and to have driven

¹ See the report of the debate in Cavendish, vol. i. p. 483—500. Lord North's and Mr. Grenville's speeches are able, particularly the latter, which contains some interesting facts explanatory and exculpatory of the passing of the Stamp Act. A fair, sensible, and impressive description of the state of public opinion in the North American Colonies was given by the Hon. Colonel Mackay (brother of Lord Reay), who had lately been serving there with his regiment. General Conway proposed to raise a colonial revenue, by a requisition to the provinces from the Crown—a plan which met with no support from any party. It is evident from the admissions made by the Ministers that they felt the impolicy of retaining the tea duty. Their difficulty was, how to abandon it without risking their own honour, or what they perhaps valued more, the King's favour. Dr. Franklin, in a letter written a fortnight after the debate, expresses a confident opinion that it would have been repealed but for the impression made on the House by Lord North's reading the letters to which Walpole refers.—E.

away the Prime Minister without shaking the Administration, was a mortifying disappointment to the Opposition; and which, though they affected great contempt for the leaders of the Court party, gave no shining idea of their own abilities employed in vain to overturn them. The next expedient to which the opponents had recourse, did as little honour to their invention, being nothing more than a renewal of petitions under the title of a remonstrance; and which, being only a variation of terms, not of means, produced, like other such remedies, no more effect than the dose to which it was a succedaneum. The Liverymen of London, indignant at the King's making no answer to their petition, had, with the assistance of the Common Council, and by the countenance (if not by the instigation) of Beckford, the Lord Mayor, obtained a Common Hall, notwithstanding the opposition of almost all the Aldermen. At that Hall it was determined to present a remonstrance to his Majesty on his not having deigned to take any notice of their petition; and the Sheriffs attended him to know when he would be waited upon with the remonstrance. The King replied, "As the case is entirely new, I will take time to consider of it, and will transmit an answer to you by one of my principal Secretaries of State." In two days Lord Weymouth wrote to the Sheriffs to know how their message was authenticated, and what the

nature had been of the assembly in which it was drawn up. The Sheriffs went the next morning with a verbal message, and insisted on being admitted to an audience to deliver it. Alderman Townshend told the King he came by direction of the Livery in Common Hall assembled. The King replied, "I will consider of the answer you have given me." From the temper both of the City and the Court, it was fortunate that no mischief arose. The boldness of the former was met by the contempt of the latter. The Remembrancer being denied admittance into the closet with the Sheriffs, he asked Lord Bolingbroke, the Lord of the Bed-chamber in waiting, whether it was not usual to admit the person possessed of the office he held? Bolingbroke replied, "I do not know: I never saw you here before, and hope never to see you here again."

Sir Robert Ladbroke proposed to the Court of Aldermen to declare that the remonstrance was no act of that court or of the Corporation of London; but the Lord Mayor refused to put the question without consulting the books of the City; and many reflections were thrown on the courtly Aldermen for attempting to govern the City contrary to its own sense. Sixteen of the Aldermen, however, protested against the remonstrance, which, by the King's allowance, was carried to him on the 14th of

March by the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs. An immense mob accompanied them, but committed no indecorum, except hissing as they passed Carlton House, the residence of the Princess Dowager. The King received them sitting on the throne. The Common Serjeant began to read the remonstrance, but being inclined to the Court, was so frightened that he could not proceed, and Sir James Hodges¹ was forced to read it. The King, with great composure, and without expressing anger, scorn, or fear, read his answer, which, though condemning the address, was uncommonly condescending, and in a style of appeal to his people.² It had been debated whether they should be admitted to kiss the King's hand. Lord Hertford, the Chamberlain, was ordered to tell the Lord Mayor, that if they desired to kiss his Majesty's hand, he would grant it. Beckford said, "I desire of all things to kiss my Sovereign's hand," which they all did. In the relation of that ceremony given the next day in the *Public Advertiser*, it was described in this bitter manner:—*the King instantly turned round to his courtiers and burst out a-laughing—Nero fiddled*

¹ Sir James Hodges, Knt., was the town-clerk. He had been a tradesman on London Bridge, and a very forward speaker at all City meetings.—E.

² "The answer was chiefly prepared by Dyson. It had received correction from several hands, and I believe was seen by Lord Mansfield."—(Sir Gilbert Elliot's MS. Journal.)—E.

but 113,000*l.* gave in the vouchers: now, 500,000*l.* had been asked without any account delivered, which had been refused even till now, though the debt had been paid. Growing more inflammatory, he drew a picture of the late King, who, he said, was *true, faithful, and sincere*, and who, when he disliked a man, always let him perceive it—a portrait intended as a satirical contrast to the character of the reigning monarch. On the Duke of Grafton he was still more bitter, whom he repeatedly called *Novice*, and whom, he said, he had never meant for First Minister; the Duke had thrust himself into the function, removing Lord Camden and Lord Shelburne; but that, when the latter was dismissed, could he have crawled out, he himself would have gone to the King, and insisted that the Duke should be dismissed too. The Duke answered with firmness and sense; said he knew Lord Chatham had wished him to hold his power only under himself, and had meant him for a cypher, *regnante Cæsare*. The debate continued chiefly between these two; but Lord Chatham adding, *that Lord Camden had been removed for his vote in Parliament*, Lord Marchmont insisted on the words being taken down. At first Lord Chatham was disconcerted, but soon avowed the words; and they were taken down, though his violence was so great that he was with difficulty compelled to sit

down. Lord Sandwich, alarmed, moved to adjourn; but the Duke of Richmond insisting that Lord Chatham, being accused, had a right to vindicate himself, and the latter declaring that he would not retract his words, Lord Marchmont grew frightened, and moved that nothing had fallen in that or any former debate that could justify the assertion of Lord Camden having been dismissed for his vote. This modification was seized by the majority, who finding Lord Chatham inflexible, did not dare to push him to extremities, but meanly and timidly voted those words, though the Opposition would not agree to them. In the course of the debate, Lord Temple said Lord Mount Stewart had done himself immortal honour by desiring to have his father's accounts produced; and that they would, he supposed, vindicate Lord Bute himself from many calumnies. It was doubted whether this was flattery, or art to draw forth the accounts, that matter might be found in them for impeachment. Of all the party, Lord Shelburne was most warm, agreeable to his maxim, that the King was timid and must be frightened. I think it was in that debate (which was a very heterogeneous one) that Lord Mansfield, being called upon for his opinion on Lutterell's case in the Middlesex election, declared his opinion should go to the grave with him, having never told it but to one of the Royal Family;

and being afterwards asked to which of them, he named the Duke of Cumberland—a conduct and confidence so absurd and weak, that no wonder he was long afterwards taunted both with his reserve, and with his choice of such a bosom-friend.

The great difficulty was to determine what part the King should take on the remonstrance. It reflected much on him—more on the House of Commons; and, in the opinion of some lawyers, amounted at least to a misdemeanour. The first idea was, that the King should lay it before both Houses with complaint; but in the meantime, Sir Thomas Clavering, a rich northern baronet, no other-ways considerable, moved the House of Commons to address the King to lay the remonstrance and his answer before the House, the former being, as he concluded by the latter, very offensive. Beckford, the two Sheriffs, and Alderman Trecothick warmly avowed their share in the remonstrance. Harley attacked Beckford as the disturber of the City's peace; and a warm altercation between them ensued. The Opposition, particularly Wedderburne, urged that to censure any petition or remonstrance, unless it was high treason,¹ was a direct violation of

¹ It is impossible not to call the attention of the reader to the conduct of that profligate man, Wedderburne. Sprung from a Jacobite family (his uncle having been executed for the last rebellion), he had set out a courtly advocate, but being laid aside on the change

the Bill of Rights. Lord North was very zealous, especially in defence of that wretch, his ancestor, the Lord Keeper, for which he was well ridiculed by Burke, who begged the House to stop, and reminded them how often he had warned them to go no farther, involving themselves more and more by every step they took. Conway answered Wedderburne with uncommon applause, condemning the remonstrance, but recommending moderation. Grenville fluctuated strangely, neither condemning or countenancing the remonstrance, but dissuading punishment. Could they, he asked, punish all concerned in it, or could they punish partially? Even

of times, he had plunged into all the intemperance of opposition, and now appeared a warm partisan of liberty, and an accuser of his own immediate patrons. His mischievous abilities soon forced him again into employment, which as naturally led him back to his old monarchic principles, to support which, he, so lately a champion of the constitution, was made Attorney-General, and at length Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas.

George Grenville was the very counterpart of Wedderburne. He was not only educated a Whig, but had leaned to republicanism. Becoming Prime Minister, no man had shown himself more despotic. When overturned by his own violence, he reverted to opposition; but having consummate pride and obstinacy, and none of the flexibility of Wedderburne, but so far more honesty, he wavered between faction and haughtiness, baffled his own purposes by half measures, and could no more accommodate his inflexible temper to the necessary means of regaining his power, than he had been able to bend it to those that were requisite for maintaining it.

Lord John Cavendish spoke for temper, and owned the remonstrance had gone too far. The address was voted by 271 against 108. The Ministers no doubt had instigated that motion as less obnoxious than a direct complaint from the Throne would have been, and as wearing the appearance of independence from the person who made the motion: but the gentleman's independence was a little sullied by the command of Languard Fort being four days after conferred on his brother, Colonel Clavering, a meritorious officer, to whom it had been promised, but which made the connection of the elder with the Court observed.¹

Such was the dangerous and disgraceful situation into which the unconstitutional intrusion of Lutterell had drawn the Court. They did not dare to punish the indignation they had provoked, lest worse consequences should ensue: nor did their triumph in maintaining Lutterell in his seat, compensate for the

¹ Colonel Clavering subsequently reaped more substantial fruits of royal favour. He was soon raised to the rank of Lieutenant-General, and made a Knight of the Bath, and Commander-in-chief in Bengal. He died in Calcutta in 1777. The King, in a private letter to Lord North, notices his death with great feeling.—Sir Thomas Clavering voted generally with the Opposition. The King regarded his interference as a favour to himself personally, and was very desirous that Lord North should let him know that his conduct was appreciated.—(Sir Gilbert Elliot's MS. Journal.)—E.

timidity they betrayed in bearing so insolent a remonstrance, which was one of the humiliating effects that had flowed from their original illegality in the prosecution of Wilkes,¹—a speaking lesson to Princes and Ministers not to stretch the strings of prerogative! The whole reign of George the Third was a standing sermon of the same kind; and the mortifications I have been recounting were but slight bruises compared to the wounds he afterwards received by not contenting himself with temperate power and established obedience.

The remonstrance and answer being delivered to the House, Sir Thomas Clavering and Sir Edward Blackett² moved a resolution, that to deny the

¹ The Ministry showed great indecision in the affair of the remonstrance. Vigorous efforts, indeed, had been made to defeat it in the City; and when these failed, the most serious perplexity followed. The Attorney-General's opinion was asked whether the remonstrance was impeachable, but no answer could be obtained from him.—(Sir Gilbert Elliot's MS. Journal.—Mr. Calcraft's letter in Chatham Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 430.) Frequent communications passed between the King and Lord North on the subject. I shall only extract the following:—"I shall be glad to hear what precedents you have got. I continue of opinion that an answer must be given to the remonstrance, and that, unless the instances are very similar of having directed a certain number to attend, it would in every way be best to receive them on the throne."—(The King's Letter to Lord North, MS., March 11.)—E.

² Sir Edward Blackett, Bart., of Matson Hall, M.P. for Northumberland. He died in 1804, at the great age of eighty-five.

validity of proceedings in Parliament was unwarrantable, and tended to disturb the peace of the kingdom. The Opposition objected to the question, as the House of Commons, being the party accused, ought not to judge in their own cause; and the previous question was moved. The day passed temperately, except that Beckford and Harley gave one another the lie. The courtiers were moderate, and the Rockingham party decent, which kept the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs within bounds. Dunning made a great figure against the Court; but the resolution passed, the previous question being rejected by 284 to 127.

The next day the same Baronets moved a loyal address to the King. The debate turned on the infringement of the Bill of Rights, by questioning petitions in Parliament. Lord John Cavendish, Wedderburne, and Sir Joseph Mawbey, acknowledged the remonstrance to be improper, but defended the right of remonstrating; and Lord John proposed a less fulsome address. Mr. Ridley, and Sir Matthew Ridley, his son, declared, they said, in the names of the country gentlemen, whose silence avowed them, that they had gone thus far with the Administration, but would go no farther if punish-

Lord Collingwood, who had married his niece, describes him as "one of the kindest and most benevolent of men."—(Correspondence and Memoirs of Lord Collingwood, vol. i. p. 129.)—E.

ment was thought of: yet Rigby talked highly for severe proceedings, and reviled the Livery and the Opposition. Beckford, not at all content with these last for supporting him no better, yet vaunted his own firmness and ridiculed the merchants who had addressed the last year, calling them *contractors* and *remittancers*; and scoffing at the courtiers in plain terms for serving for such scanty pay, in comparison of contractors who made 5000*l.* or 6000*l.* a year. Lord North himself, he said, had not above 2000*l.* a year. Lord North offered to the Cavendishes to omit the most exceptionable parts of the address; but as they would not close with him, it was voted by 284 to 94.¹ The Lords, on the 22nd having had a conference with the Commons, concurred in the address. Lord Chatham was confined by the gout. Lord Shelburne alone avowed the language of the remonstrance. Lord Denbigh and Lord Pomfret were, on the other hand, as gross in flattery to the King. Lord North's moderation, concurring with the opinion of many lawyers, that the remonstrance was no misdemeanour, prevented any farther views of punishment on that subject.

¹ The debate is reported by Cavendish, vol. i. p. 516-45. It is to be regretted that he has taken no notice of Dunning's speech. Burke makes the greatest figure in the report, but Lord North is also very able.—E.

CHAPTER IV.

Bills introduced by Mr. Herbert and Mr. Grenville.—Conversation on Secret Influence.—Remarks.—City Dinner to the Opposition.—Curious Phrase employed by Lord Chatham.—Termination of Wilkes's Imprisonment.—Riot at Boston.—Debate on the Prorogation of the Irish Parliament.—Lord Chatham moves a Censure on Ministers.—Observations on the State of Parties.—Publication of Burke's *Thoughts on the Present Discontents*.—Criticism of it.—Influence of Lord Bute.—Character of the Pelham Administration.—New Party.—Their Aristocratic Tendencies.—Diminution of the Privileges of Peers and Commoners with regard to their Creditors.—Desultory Discussions on American Affairs, and the Middlesex Election.

1770.

THESE debates were tedious and unentertaining, and willingly I abridge them: totally omitted they could not be; they were the constituent ingredients of an inglorious reign, in which many of the most solemn questions that compose or touch the essence of our constitution were agitated—questions that will live in our law-books, when omitted in polished histories written for entertainment. These pages, therefore, will serve for a clue

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to writers on the laws, though they may not be so fortunate as to please the idle. I shall slightly mention some other bills that were discussed about the same time.

Mr. Herbert,¹ a near relation of the Earl of Pembroke, and a young man of great fortune and good principles, proposed a bill to declare that expulsion did not imply incapacitation unless for certain crimes infamous by law. Doubts were started on what those crimes were. The House was strongly inclined to the bill: the Ministers pretended not to discountenance it—but the Jesuits of the Treasury, Dyson and Jenkinson, undermined it indirectly: the latter went so far as to engraft a clause on that bill calculated to secure the rights of freeholders, which would have made it an instrument of tyranny, and would have made expulsion or imprisonment total incapacity. Lord North affected to be struck by and to approve that juggle; but Lord Beauchamp, General Conway, and even the smooth courtier Lord Barrington, resisting, and the latter declaring that it was necessary to quiet the minds of the people, Lord North gave it up. The Cabal however clogged the bill with so many subtleties and

¹ Henry Herbert, afterwards created Lord Portchester, [and in 1793 Earl of Caernarvon. He was Master of the Horse in 1806. He died in 1811. The present Earl is his grandson.—E.]

contradictions, that Mr. Herbert abandoned it with indignation, and it was lost.¹

Mr. George Grenville was more successful with a bill that the profligacy of the times loudly demanded, and which even that profligacy could not defeat. It was to take the trials of contested elections from the judicatory of the House, and vest them in a smaller number of examiners to be chosen by ballot. Important as the nature of elections is, and sacred as the property of legal votes, of the right of counties and boroughs to choose their representatives, and of the elected to his seat, yet all was overlooked, and petitions were heard and decided solely by favour or party. Nor was this accidental, but constant and universal. Grenville's bill was generally liked. Rigby and Dyson opposed it, and at last Lord North, who endeavoured to put it off for two months; but he was defeated by 185 to 133.²

¹ This debate took place on the 4th of February; it is reported in Cavendish, vol. i. p. 435.—E.

² The debate is reported in Cavendish, vol. i. p. 505. The argument was all on one side, little being urged against the bill deserving of serious refutation. The measure had the good fortune to receive very general approbation out of the House, and by many it was regarded as giving its author an incontestable claim to the gratitude of his country. How far all this commendation was genuine, is another question. It has of later days been doubted whether the Grenville Act has not been productive of more harm than good. It certainly increased the number of petitions, without diminishing the expense of prosecuting them, and any

The resistance of the House to the power of the Administration on those two bills, proved, with some instances I have mentioned, that that House of Commons was not implicitly servile on all occasions like the last. Grenville's bill passed on the 2nd of April, but not without a remarkable conversation rather than a debate on political creeds and secret influence. Grenville and Dowdeswell declared they had been under none when they were in place. Samuel Martin desired the House to take notice of that declaration. It was evidence, he said, that Lord Bute was falsely accused; and that such rumours were raised to excite the mob against him on his return from abroad. Colonel Barré said the *two gentlemen* had only declared they had not been influenced *themselves*: but Lord Chatham had solemnly affirmed to the Lords that even in six weeks his schemes had been controlled; and it was evident where the secret influence lay, when Mar-

improvement it may have effected in the tribunal for trying them was very short lived. As long as political parties were split into several sections, the election committees preserved a decent impartiality; but from the time that only two great parties were recognised in the State, all the evils revived which it had been the object of the Act to extirpate. Such gross injustice was committed as at length to rouse public indignation, and after much discussion in the House the Committees were again essentially reformed by a recent Act. This measure was framed with care and good intentions; but some of the decisions to which it has given rise are too startling for it to be yet recognised as a successful piece of legislation.—E.

tin and Jenkinson, the servants of the Princess of Wales, and when Dyson and Sir Gilbert Elliot, were so much consulted. That was the cabinet that governed the Cabinet.¹ Lord North declared that he would be nominal no longer than he was real Minister. There wanted no better proof of the secret influence than that Lord Bute had the credit to maintain Oswald, Elliot, Dyson, and Jenkinson, or some of them, in the Treasury through every Administration subsequent to his own, by which he might be master of all the secrets of that important board which influences the whole Government,—at

¹ Barré might have added, that Grenville had fallen because he was not influenced by Lord Bute, but had been at enmity with him, and turned out his brother Mackenzie; and that Dowdeswell had fallen from the same cause, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer under Lord Rockingham, who was also an enemy to Lord Bute. Fourteen years after the period here treated, viz., in 1783-4, *the secret influence* was no longer secret; the Duke of Portland's Administration was openly overturned by the exertion of that influence, and, which is still more remarkable, the eldest son of the very Mr. Grenville here mentioned was the tool employed by Jenkinson (here also in question) and the secret cabal of the King. Be it remembered, too, that Mr. Grenville's bill which for thirteen years had been carried into constant execution with strict justice and applause, was impeached in the first instance of the new Parliament of 1784, chosen in consequence of that secret influence, and upon occasion of the scrutiny for the Westminster election, which violation was practised by Mr. William Pitt, the second son of Lord Chatham, in which he was supported by Mr. William Grenville, the second son of Mr. George Grenville, author of the bill.

least they were agents whom he had recommended to the King; and if the Earl himself did not preserve the same degree of credit with his Majesty, the King acted on the plan in which he had been initiated, and had cunning enough, as most Princes have, to employ and trust those only who were disposed to sacrifice the interest of the country to the partial and selfish views of the Crown; views to which his Majesty so steadily adhered on every opportunity which presented itself, that, not having sense enough to discover how much the glory and power of the King is augmented by the flourishing state of the country he governs, he not only preferred his personal influence to that of England, but risked, exposed, and lost a most important portion of his dominions by endeavouring to submit that mighty portion to a more immediate dependence on the royal will. Mystery, insincerity, and duplicity were the engines of his reign. They sometimes procured success to his purposes, oftener subjected him to grievous insults and mortifications, and never obtained his object without forfeiting some share of his character, and exposing his dignity to affronts, and reproach from his subjects, and his authority to contempt from foreign nations. He seemed to have derived from his relations the Stuarts, all their perseverance in crooked and ill-judged policy without profiting by their experience, or recollecting that

this branch had owed the Crown to the attempts made by the former Princes at extending the prerogative beyond the bounds set to it by the constitution. Nor does a sovereign, imbued with such fatal ambition, ever want a Jefferies or a Mansfield, or such less ostensible tools as the Dysons and Jenkinsons, who for present emolument are ready to gibbet themselves to immortal infamy by seconding the infatuation of their masters.

Beckford, the Lord Mayor, gave a great dinner to the lords and gentlemen of the Opposition: a cavalcade of the Livery fetched and escorted the company from the Thatched House Tavern in St. James's Street; and at night many houses were illuminated, and a few had their windows broken for not being lighted. Lord Chatham had, by earnest entreaties, engaged Lord Granby to carry him to the Mansion House in his chariot, but was prevented by the gout from joining in the procession, which his pressing a popular general to head, did not seem calculated to promote tranquillity. In fact, no efforts were spared to keep up the spirit. The freeholders of Westminster met and voted a remonstrance, which, omitting the most exceptionable parts of that from the City, was immediately presented to the King. Another was voted by the freeholders of Middlesex; but no answer was given by his Majesty to either.

A few of the Opposition, who acted with decency and impartiality, condemned the violences of their party. Sir William Meredith complained of the letters of *Junius*, of *The Whisperer*, and of *The Parliamentary Spy*. Thurlow, the new Solicitor-General, in the room of Dunning, said a prosecution was commenced against the first. General Howard again complained of *The Whisperer*; and a conference being desired with the Lords, it was voted an infamous and seditious paper.

Lord Chatham, who seemed to imbibe faction from disappointment, desired the Lords might be summoned for after the holidays, as he intended to propose a bill to endeavour to repair the mischief done by the iniquitous decision of the House of Commons on the Middlesex election; nor was he less intent on raising jealousies of the designs of France. He pronounced, in the month of March, that by that very day on which he was speaking, the French had *somewhere* struck a hostile stroke. This asseveration making great noise, alarmed the merchants, who sent a deputation to him, to inquire *where* the blow was struck. He denied having said so; and some who were present, declared they had not heard him say it. This was merely negative and personal to themselves, for, in general, his audience were positive as to the words; and it was not less remarkable, that a year afterwards, when the

seizure of Falkland's Island by the Spaniards became public, Lord Chatham's partisans affirmed that he had made such a declaration, but had accused Spain, not France, of having committed hostilities. He did not even spare the King, but accused him of duplicity. The Duke of Grafton defended the royal accused. The King soon afterwards asked General Conway if he ever saw the Duke, and where he lived? Conway said he knew nothing of him: "Nor I," said his Majesty; "he has not come near me these six weeks; nay, when I heard of his defending me against Lord Chatham, I wrote a letter of thanks to the Duke; he not only did not answer my letter, but has taken no notice of it since."

On the 17th of April ended the imprisonment of Wilkes, and he was discharged from the King's Bench, whence he retired privately into the country, affecting to decline the congratulations of his fellow citizens. The next night many houses of the lower rank were illuminated, but without any tumult. The Court had taken care to prevent any disturbance, by stationing numbers of constables, and by holding the Guards and Light Horse in readiness. Blackford had affected like solicitude, giving out orders for peaceable behaviour, but on account of the Easter holidays; while his own house in St. James's square was decorated with the word Liberty on ample capitals. Wilkes, now entering

again on the scene, published an address of thanks to the county of Middlesex, and another to the ward of Farringdon. In those and former addresses, he had the assurance to talk of protecting our *religious* as well as civil liberties. When Lord Sandwich informed against the “*Essay on Woman*,” *he* too talked religion. It was impossible to decide which was the more impudent, the persecutor or the martyr! The release of Wilkes was celebrated at Lynn, Norwich, Swaffham, Bristol, and a few other towns, but not universally. At the end of the month, he was sworn in Alderman of Farringdon ward. The solid retribution was the work of the Society of the Bill of Rights. They paid or compromised a great part of his debts, disbursing seven thousand pounds for him.

Zeal for his cause reigned almost as strongly in the city of Westminster. Having lost one of their members by the death of Lord Sandys, whose son, one of their representatives, succeeded to his father's title, they elected Sir Robert Barnard, a knight of Huntingdonshire, known to them only as an enemy to Lord Sandwich, in his own county,¹ and by

¹ Sir Robert Bernard, Bart., of Brampton Park, Hunts. He was a bustling eager politician, and, like Sawbridge and others of the same extreme principles, had found more scope for his activity in London than his own county. He died without issue in 1789, having left his estates to his nephew, Robert Sparrow, Esq., afterwards Brigadier-General Bernard Sparrow, from whom

having presented its remonstrance to the King. The Court did not dare to set up a counter candidate, though seated in the heart of Westminster, amidst their own and the tradesmen of the nobility.

Samuel, Lord Sandys, died by a hurt from an overturn. He had formerly been the head of the republican party, and a leader against Sir Robert Walpole, on whose fall, he was made Chancellor of the Exchequer, a promotion that cost him his character, both as a patriot and a man of business. He was soon removed for his incapacity, and made a peer; and, at different times, filled other posts, as Chief Justice in Eyre and Speaker of the House of Lords; but never recovered any weight, and at last was laid aside with a pension.¹

At the end of the month arrived a very alarming account from Boston. Some young apprentices had, incited to it, as it seemed, insulted the soldiers quartered there. After repeated provocations, the tumult they have descended to the Duchess of Manchester—the General's only surviving child.—E.

¹ Lord Sandys had been placed at the Board of Trade on the King's accession in 1760 (*supra*, vol. i. p. 44), when the *comprehensive* principle on which the Government was formed brought men of very different political opinions into office. He seems to have regarded his post as a sinecure—as indeed it in a great measure became by the withdrawal of the West Indies from the department. He left an only son, on whose death the title became extinct.—E.

increasing, some of the soldiers fired, and killed four of the lads, and apprehended some others. In an instant the sedition spread through the whole town, clamouring for the instant removal of the garrison, with which the Deputy Governor and the commanding officer were forced to comply, not only intimidated by the actual riot, but receiving intelligence that the neighbouring towns were taking up arms, and would march to the assistance of the Bostonians, who already imprisoned Colonel Preston, who, they affirmed, had given orders to the soldiers to fire. That he strenuously denied; and being a man of a mild and prudent character, his case excited great pity and indignation here. Nor, though the seditious charged the military with sanguinary intentions, was it credited; the soldiers, it appearing, being so little prepared to attack, that when they ran to the assistance of their comrades, some were armed only with shovels, and others with tongs. Volumes of inflammatory informations were sent over hither and reprinted; and Alderman Trecothick moved in the House of Commons for a sight of the instructions sent to Boston, which, after some debate, were granted with restrictions; but shortly after came letters, in which the Bostonians endeavoured to palliate their violence; and it was known that Colonel Preston would not be tried till August, which might and did give time to the more mode-

rate there to soften his case, and interpose in his favour. After a formidable suspense, he was honourably acquitted.

On the 28th died Marshal Ligonier, aged ninety-two.¹ The first regiment of Guards was given to the King's brother, the Duke of Gloucester, and the third to Lord Loudun. Lord Edgcumbe was made Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, to the scandal of the Rockingham party, the Duke of Portland having resigned on the dismissal of Lord Edgcumbe, who, in truth, had long been too ready to abandon that party, and at all times professed himself too solicitous to keep or obtain a place; yet as his old friends had joined Lord Chatham, who had turned him out, he seemed as much at liberty to take on with those whom Lord Chatham opposed.

Lord Chatham, in consequence of the notice he had given, moved for a bill to rescind all the various resolutions of the House of Commons on the Middlesex election, and was supported by Lord Camden and Lord Shelburne; Lord Mansfield and the Ministers opposed and rejected the bill by 89 to 43.

The next day, Captain Boyle Walsingham, in the Commons, moved for all the letters and papers sent to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, which had occasioned the prorogation of the Parliament there,

¹ For an account of Lord Ligonier see *supra*, vol. i. p. 208, note.—E.

and had interrupted much business of consequence—a punishment the more severe, as the augmentation demanded had been accorded. Grenville again complained of his Majesty's waiving his prerogative, by promising not to call over those troops but in case of rebellion,—a strange plea in an opponent! but Grenville never liked opposition so well as in *defence* of prerogative; while to excuse his Majesty's moderation, Lord Barrington and Rigby maintained that, in case of emergency, the King might disregard his promise,—a power of evasion very unnecessary to claim, when it had been so lately and so wantonly violated, merely to give a pension to Dyson, though the Irish had been promised that no more such pensions on their country should be granted. The motion was rejected by 178 to 66.¹

Lord Chatham made another prolix motion, tending to censure the Ministers for the answer they had advised the Crown to make to the remonstrance from the City. His speech was long, animated with his most nervous eloquence, and patched with his wildest ignorance and inventions. He talked of *Androgeus*, Lord Mayor of London the time of Julius Cæsar, defending the *privileges* of the City, and of the care Edward the first had of those liberties. Lord Gower told

¹ The debate is reported by Cavendish, vol. i. p. 552.—E.

but nothing would have induced them to specify at what period of its influence they would have been contented to have stopped. The line of Hanover having been advanced to the throne by the forfeiture of the Stuarts, could not have the confidence to demand all the power that had been claimed by that House from which they descended, whose maxims they secretly revered, and whose want of abilities they inherited. King William had been too much controlled by his parliaments to serve them for a precedent; and the beginning of this very reign had been too servilely copied from the conclusion of Queen Anne's, and too ingloriously to be fit for quotation, though the doctrines of her last Ministers were the rule on which the junto had intended to act, and did act whenever they found themselves strong enough. But, as recent provocations govern the actions of men more than maxims, it was the conduct of the later Ministers of George the Second that first inspired the Princess of Wales and her husband, Prince Frederic, with desires of emancipating themselves from such pupillage. I am persuaded that she, her husband, and her son (if the latter at first had any plan) meditated humbling the aristocracy, rather than invading liberty. Yet is every increase of prerogative so fatal, and so sure are the people of being trampled upon in such contest, whether

Let it be observed, however, that, when I impute to the King and his mother little more than a formed design of reducing the usurped authority of the great Lords, I am far from meaning that there were not deeper designs at bottom. Lord Mansfield was by principle a tyrant; Lord Holland was bred in a monarchic school, was cruel, revengeful, daring, and subtle. Grenville, though in principle a republican, was bold, proud, dictatorial, and so self-willed that he would have expected Liberty herself should be his first slave. The Bedford faction, except the Duke himself, were void of honour, honesty, and virtue; and the Scotch were whatever their masters wished them to be, and too envious of the English, and became too much provoked by them, not to lend all their mischievous abilities towards the ruin of a constitution, whose benefits the English had imparted to them, but did not like they should engross. All these individuals or factions, I do not doubt, accepted and fomented the disposition they found predominant in the Cabinet, as they had severally access to it; and the contradictions which the King suffered in his ill-advised measures, riveted in him a thirst of delivering himself from control, and to be above control he must be absolute. Thus on the innate desire of unbounded power in all princes, was engrafted a hate to the freedom of the subject,

impartiality was divested of personalities, nobody would believe me if I asserted ; they undoubtedly often lowered my zeal, and even in these cool hours of retreat and retirement, may have left impressions that reflection may not have corrected—though the overt acts of the American war have but too sadly realized the more problematic suspicions I had entertained of the evil designs of the Court, from the first ten years of the reign. Lust of power, supported by cruelty and obstinacy, marked every year of that fatal war ; and its woeful event having corrected neither the bad intention nor the folly with which it was commenced and prosecuted, and a more undisguised attempt in the Crown of governing independently having distinguished the year 1784, I should have observed the whole progress of the reign hitherto with little judgment, if I had not a worse opinion of the spirit that has actuated it, than I had when I first entertained doubts of its designs against the constitution. However, instead of seeing with my eyes, I recommended to posterity to use their own discernment, abandon the author, accept what truths he has delivered, correct his mistakes, condemn his prejudices, make the best use you can of any wholesome lessons he has inculcated, avoid such errors as he has pointed out. He has written prodigiously too much, if no man shall be the wiser for his writings. He laments not his

prised that the Duke of Richmond, who had a great deal of sense, could be captivated by a work calculated for no one end but to deify Lord Rockingham, and to insinuate that Mahomet was his prophet.

Mrs. Macaulay, whose principles were more sound and more fixed than Burke's, and whose reasoning was more simple and more exact, published a short tract in answer, censuring the work as compiled solely to serve the partial interests of an aristocratic faction.* It was a still stronger

* Burke himself.

Observations on a pamphlet entitled "Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents," by Catherine Macaulay, 8vo.,

price 2s.

"Assume a virtue if you have it not."

This tract has long since sunk into oblivion; no copy of it is to be found even in the British Museum, and I have searched for it in vain in other large repositories of ephemeral literature. As far as can be inferred from the extracts and criticism in contemporary periodicals, Mrs. Macaulay's great panacea for the removal of all national grievances consisted of short Parliaments, with the additional security of members being made incapable of re-election under a certain number of years. This arrangement the writer predicted would do away with the evils generally considered to attach to frequent elections, "so that the violent contentions for seats in Parliament, both on the side of Government and of individuals, would sink into the quiet coolness of nominations for parish officers."—She overlooked the effect of such a system on the character of the House, and the experience of Franco seems to prove that it would lead to the election of few persons above the calibre of parish officers.

The style and spirit of the work seem to be fairly repre-

by dereliction of Wilkes, by disclaiming triennial Parliaments and place-bills,¹ and encouraged no denomination of men to unite with them, as it declared in terms that should Lord Rockingham and his friends come into place, they should do little more than turn out those whom the book called *the King's men*, who called themselves *the King's friends*, and who, notwithstanding, the book declared were never admitted to the *King's confidence*.

But the most absurd part of all, was Burke's discharging Lord Bute of all present influence,—a fact not only improbable, as had lately appeared by the influence of his brother Mackenzie—by Lord North's taking Sir James Lowther's steward for his secretary, and by Sir James's late hostilities to the Duke of Grafton who had but half supported him, and by his co-operation with Lord North—by another clerk, whom Jenkinson had placed in Lord North's service, and who grew to govern him;² and by the homage which all succeeding ministers were

¹ Lord North, like other Prime Ministers, never attended committees of elections. Mackenzie being pushed on a Scotch election which he favoured, sent for Lord North late in the evening (at this very time) to vote, though he had not heard the cause—and yet they were beaten.

² Brummell, chief clerk in the Treasury; the laborious and faithful servant, and not the master of Lord North.—E.

obliged to pay to the Bute-standard, or to risk their power: but it was extremely unwise in a

¹ Mrs. Anne Pitt, Lady Bute's friend, offered Lord Villiers, her

relation and son of the Countess of Grandison, that the Princess of Wales should procure for him an English Peerage, if he would marry one of Lord Bute's daughters. This was in June 1771. I had it from Lord Villiers himself, who married a daughter of Lord Hertford, my first cousin. I have changed my opinion, I confess, various times on the subject of Lord Bute's favour with the King; but this I take to have been the truth. From the death of her husband the Princess Dowager had the sole influence over her son, and introduced Lord Bute into his confidence; but I believe that even before his accession the King was weary both of his mother and of her favourite, and wanted to, and did early shake off much of that influence. After Lord Bute's resignation, his credit declined still more, and Lord Bute certainly grew disgusted, though he still retained authority enough over the King to be consulted, or to force himself into a share of the counsels that changed so many Ministries till after Lord Chatham's last Administration. Lord Bute's pride was offended at the wane of his power; and on his last return from abroad, the King complained to the Duke of Gloucester that *the fellow* (that was the term) had not once paid his duty to him. I have doubted whether that coolness was not affected; yet it was carrying dissimulation far indeed, and unnecessarily, if acted to his favourite brother, then living in the palace with him, in his confidence, not hostile to Bute, nor then likely to report the communication. Such solemn declarations had indeed been made both by the King and Bute that they never saw each other in private, that those visits could not be frequent, and the King no doubt was glad of that pretext for avoiding an irksome dictator. Afterwards, the engrossing ambition of Bute's son, Lord Mount Stewart, was hurt at the proscription of his father; and whenever his own suits were denied he broke out publicly, and frequently quarrelled with Lord

politic light, for while the book thus removed from the people's attention an odious and ostensible ob-

North, who would not have thwarted his views had the King countenanced them; yet as Lord Mount Stewart generally carried his points at last, it is probable that Bute had been trusted too deeply to make it safe totally to break with him. However, his credit was so small that, towards the end of the American war, Mackenzie, through whom the intercourse was chiefly carried on, retired to Scotland, and for some time came rarely to London. But in the year 1753 Bute again saw the King often, though very privately; and though Lord Mount Stewart warmly and loudly espoused the party of Charles Fox, Mackenzie adhered to the King; and Lord Bute owned that though he thought Mr. Fox the only man who could save this country, he loved the King so much that he could not resist his Majesty's entreaties to support him.

If I have accounted rightly for so great a mystery as whether Lord Bute had an ascendant or not from the time of his ceasing to be openly Prime Minister, I might be asked, Who then had real influence with the King, for his subsequent Ministers indubitably had not?—I should answer readily, Jenkinson. He was the sole confidant of the King; and having been the creature of Bute, might choose prudentially not to incense his old patrons but to keep him in play enough to divert the public eye from himself; and thence, I conclude, mediated now and then for favours for Lord Bute's friends, and despised his intellects too much to apprehend his recovery of credit. Lord Mansfield no doubt frequently, when his timidity would suffer him, was consulted and gave advice, and especially was deep in the plan of the American war; and though the King's views and plans were commonly as pestilent to his own interest as to his people, yet as they were often artfully conducted, he and Bute were too ignorant and too incapable to have digested the measures; and therefore, as nobody else enjoyed the royal confidence, there can be no doubt

ject, it presented them with nothing but a vague idea, which it called a *Double Cabinet*. Did Burke flatter himself that the Princess was so very sentimental, as to forgive a personal attack on herself in consideration of his tenderness to her favourite? Would their tools be content to be proscribed, to save their patron's head? And who instructed, who disciplined, Lord Bute's creatures, but himself? If the Princess was the intermediate agent between them and the King, who conveyed his commands or their advice from her to them, and *vice versa*, but Lord Bute, Lady Bute, or Mr. Mackenzie? The exculpation of Lord Bute was therefore silly and impotent flattery, or sillier credulity instilled into Burke by Lord Holland, who always held that

language.

Whether it proceeded from ignorance or partiality I do not know, but in fathoming the grounds of the reigning discontents, Mr. Burke was as defective in not going back far enough, as he was in but Jenkinson was the director or agent of all his Majesty's secret counsels. Jenkinson was able, shrewd, timid, cautious, and dark; and much fitter to suggest and digest measures than to execute them. His appearance was abject; his countenance betrayed a consciousness of secret guile; and though his ambition and rapacity were insatiate, his demeanour exhibited such a want of spirit, that had he stood forth as Prime Minister, which he really was, his very look would have encouraged opposition; for who can revere authority which seems to confess itself improperly placed, and ashamed of its own awkwardly assumed importance!

the inefficiency of his remedies. Though his book contained many melancholy truths, it was far from probing to the bottom of the sore. The canker had begun in the Administration of the Pelhams and Lord Hardwicke, who, at the head of a proud aristocracy of Whig Lords, had thought of nothing but establishing their own power; and who, as it suited their occasional purposes, now depressed and insulted the Crown and Royal Family, and now raised the prerogative. Their factious usurpations and insolence were even some excuse for the maxim taken up by Frederic Prince of Wales, by the Princess Dowager, and the reigning King, of breaking that overbearing combination; and so blinded were the Pelhams by their own ambition, that they furnished the Princess with men whose principles and abilities were best suited to inspire arbitrary notions into her son, and to instruct him how to get rid of his tyrants, and establish a despotism that may end in tyranny in his descendants. Though the Princess and Lord Bute gave rashly in to those views, their passions, folly, and cowardice oftener defeated the plan than promoted it; and it was in this light only that Lord Bute ought to be acquitted of raising the prerogative. *He* rendered it contemptible; while Stone and Murray were the real sources of those discontents, which Burke sought, but never discovered. As I have

said so much in the first part of these Memoirs on these heads, it is unnecessary to retail them here. A few facts will evince that the Pelhams, Hardwicke, and their friends, were an aristocratic faction; that they insulted and provoked the Crown and Royal Family, and raised disgusts in them against the Whig party, at the same time planting the rankest Tories about the successor and his mother, and forcing them to throw themselves into the arms of even Jacobites.

1. When the late King intended to restore Lord Granville, the Minister of his own election, the Pelhams, leaguings with the great Lords and principal Whigs, deserted him in the very heat of the rebellion, and obliged him to surrender at discretion. What a lesson was that to the late Prince!—no wonder it laid him open to the wiles of Lord Bolingbroke!

2. Newcastle had long lain in the bosom of that dark and suspected friend of the Stuarts, Andrew Stone. The darling friend of the latter was that bright ornament of the age, that luminary of the law, that second hero of Pope and first disciple of Bolingbroke, William Murray, brother of the Pretender's Prime Minister, the titular Earl of Dunbar. The fickle Duke and his timid brother, of whom the elder loved nothing so much as a new friend in a reconciled enemy, as the younger with still less sincerity courted every man whose parts he dreaded,

were easily persuaded to give themselves up to so useful an assistant, whose walk interfered with the ambition of neither. From that hour every measure was coloured with a tincture of prerogative; and a foundation was laid for that structure against which the disciples of the Pelhams have so much declaimed since.

3. While that dangerous man¹ was infusing his poison into the Court of the King, his friend Lord Bolingbroke was sowing the same seeds at Leicester House. Seemingly attached to different factions, St. John and Murray were carrying on the same plan at both Courts. The death of the Prince, that threatened destruction to the scheme, facilitated its success. In truth had the advice of a man who has since been no enemy to the plan been followed, the principles instilled into a young mind might not have been so early and so deeply laid. Mr. Fox,² the very next morning after the death of the Prince of Wales, advised Mr. Pelham to make sure of the successor by sending for him to St. James's, and keeping him there separate from his mother. The Princess, indeed, might not have secured the same influence over him as she did; but from the persons employed in the education of the young Prince, there is little reason to think that exactly the same

¹ William Murray, Lord Mansfield.
² Henry Fox, first Lord Holland.

care would not have been taken of initiating him in *proper* principles. All Fox's subsequent merits in the cause—even the gracious promises made to him by the young King, and broken, could not expiate that offence.¹

4. The persons employed, the books put into his hands, the disgrace of the first governor and preceptor of the young Prince, the interference of Lord Mansfield, and the ensuing history of Favacett's deposition of the Jacobitism of Stone and Murray, the secrecy first exercised to stifle his evidence, and the mock declaration of the Cabinet of Counsellors when the affair got into the House of Lords, where, instead of any examination, that ordeal of an aristocracy, their word of honour, was only made use of,—all these circumstances concurred in the formation of those evils whose source Mr. Burke so ingeniously missed.

5. The ignorance, blunders, and want of spirit in Newcastle, Lord Anson, and Lord Hardwicke² at

¹ Mr. Fox wrote an account of his having given that advice to his friend Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, then at his seat in Monmouthshire. Sir Charles dying, his papers fell into the hands of his elder brother, who was a very dirty fellow, and who, quarrelling with Mr. Fox, betrayed that letter to the Princess Dowager. When Mr. Fox undertook the support of the peace of Paris for Lord Bute in 1763, he was promised an Earldom, but never could obtain it.

² The incapacity of that Administration, on which I have said

MEMOIRS OF THE REIGN OF
[1770.]

the beginning of the war, made way for the pre-
dominant genius of Mr. Pitt: but though the osier-
like nature of Newcastle stooped to act with the
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The profusion of the German war (for which Mr.
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so much, has been laid open to the public, and confirmed by the
Diary of Lord Melcombe, published in 1784. Lord Melcombe
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is often obscure, and, as being written only with a view to him-
self, he seldom details or explains either debates or events, if he
had nothing to do in them, or did not attend their commencement
or conclusion in the House of Commons. Yet as far as it goes
his Diary is most uncommonly authentic; and as it is so very
disgraceful to himself we cannot doubt but he believed what he
wrote to be true. Where he and I write on the same passages
we shall be found to agree, though we never had any connec-
tion, were of very different principles, and received our informa-
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demands) was laid solely to the account of the vigorous Minister, as if it was more criminal in him to dare, than in the other to dissipate our treasure without daring. Even before the death of the late King, was published the celebrated pamphlet called "*Considerations on the German War*," written under the patronage and revisal of Lord Hardwicke. That Lord Hardwicke and Lord Bute agreed about that time, at least in their measures, for the destruction of Mr. Pitt, was evident by a place being, immediately on the King's accession, bestowed by Lord Bute on Mauduit, author of that pamphlet.

6. Nor were these the sole instances of that aristocratic spirit I have mentioned. The Duke of Newcastle who in the very dawn of the Hanoverian succession had forced himself, as godfather to his son, upon the then Prince of Wales, in the next reign set himself up as candidate for the Chancellorship of Cambridge against the next Prince of Wales, Frederic; and even caused the King to prohibit the University to elect his son. Such were the ideas a Whig aristocracy forced the Royal Family to entertain of that party; as if the revolution had been calculated to confirm the power of the nobility, rather than to secure the constitution and the liberty of the people.

7. The marriage act, schemed, drawn, and im-

posed by Lord Hardwicke, repugnant to the principles of a commercial country, and intended solely to guard the wealth of the nobility from being dispersed among their fellow citizens; the extension of the Habeas Corpus prevented by Lord Mansfield; and the murder of Admiral Byng¹ to palliate the loss of Minorca, which had been sacrificed by the negligence of Lord Anson and by the Duke of Newcastle's panic of an invasion, were all fruits of the same spirit. Was it possible to review these facts, and affirm that the principles of arbitrary power were not sown till the present reign? The Crown, indeed, got rid of the first authors of the mischief; but then made advantage of the doctrines they had established: for though a predominant nobility often struggle with the Crown, the contest is only which shall oppress the people, and they as often abet the Crown in encroachments on liberty. The number of members in the House of Commons

¹ Princess Amelie told me in October 1783 that the Duchess of Newcastle sent Lady Sophia Egerton to her, the Princess, to beg her to be for the execution of Admiral Byng; "They thought," added the Princess, "that unless he was put to death, Lord Anson could not be at the head of the Admiralty; indeed," added her Royal Highness, "I was already for it: the officers would never have fought if he had not been executed." Am I in the wrong to speak of that act as shocking, when such means and arts were employed to take away a life, and for such a reason as the interest of Lord Anson?

named by great Lords, and the consequential dependence of the Lower on the Upper House, facilitated those views; and when once the resentment and interest of the Court taught them to break the Cabal, they made use of the power of those whom they had interest or art enough to detach from the faction.

8. On the death of the late King, the Princess, Lord Bute, and their junto, provoked, as I have said, by the great Whig Lords, whom they feared, inclined to the Tories by the counsels of Bolingbroke, Mansfield, and Stone, and disposed by the love of power to endeavour to rise above the constitution, had one capital view—the restoration of the prerogative; and several secondary views, as the destruction of Mr. Pitt, who possessed the hearts of the people, the breaking of the aristocratic Cabal, and the conclusion of a peace, without which they could not have leisure, authority, or money to pursue their other objects. Mr. Burke complained of the Duke of Grafton, Mr. Conway, and other Whigs, for being duped by the Court, and for deserting *their* connection; but that mischief was done before these came into place, and done by those whom Burke would persuade the world were Whig patriots, namely, Newcastle, Hardwicke, Devonshire,¹ &c. Mr. Pitt foresaw the turn the Court would take,

¹ The fourth Duke.

and prudently proposed, it was affirmed, to the Duke of Newcastle to league against Lord Bute; and there can be no doubt of the truth of that assertion, as Pitt would never again hear of any connection with Newcastle. The Duke loved present power and favour too well to listen to the overture; and notorious it was that Newcastle, Hardwicke, Devonshire, and the Duke of Bedford, urged on by Lord Mansfield and Mr. Fox, did assist the Favourite against Mr. Pitt, and combined to drive him from the Administration. That was the real breach that facilitated the views of the Court. Newcastle, indeed, soon found his error, and was the first sacrifice, as the Duke of Devonshire was the next; while Stone and Mansfield, charmed to see the era arrived that they had so ardently expected and prepared, abandoned the silly Duke and his still sillier associates, and remained fast friends to the reviving prerogative. Then, *and not till then*, the Whig Lords grew alarmed at the designs of the Court. Lord Rockingham resigned with Newcastle; and Devonshire was affronted and disgraced. These last then thought the country grew seriously in danger; but had Newcastle and his friends been able to keep their places, I question whether we should ever have heard *from them* of arbitrary schemes, any more than of Mr. Burke's pamphlet; though I have no more doubt of the dangerous pro-

jects of the Court, than I believe Lord Rockingham's party likely, or capable to prevent them.

I shall say but little on the conclusion of a work which prescribed unlimited voting with Lord Rockingham and his friends as the test of *honesty*; while at the same time, *conscience* is disclaimed, "*because,*" says the book, "*no man can see into the heart of another*"—the context of which curious doctrine is, that it is more virtuous to follow another man, or other men (into whose hearts neither can one see), than to obey the impulse of one's own conscience. Nothing, or almost nothing, was promised to the Nation by that faction, should they attain power; and yet, with so scanty a catalogue of merits, they claimed implicit confidence from all men! "*For,*" says the author, "*can a man have sat long in Parliament without seeing any one set of men whose character, conduct, or disposition would lead him to associate with them, and aid and be aided by them in any one system of public utility?*"¹ I answer, if he is an

¹ Burke's Works, vol. ii. p. 340.—There is room for ascribing the severity of Walpole's criticism on these passages to the application of which they are susceptible to the conduct of Conway. Burke is very likely to have had him in mind when he dwelt on the suspicion that necessarily attaches to politicians who separate themselves from men with whom they had always before acted, on grounds which do not come under the denomination of "leading principles in government." In common with the leaders of Rock-

What enjoined a man to follow Lord Rockingham, both when he agreed with Lord Chatham or Mr. Grenville, and when he did not? The line of concord and the line of discord should have been marked out, and men should have been told what were the principles, and what the objects of each class. If they differed in principles, why did they agree in measures? If they differed for power, how could they ever agree? In the meantime was every man's conscience to be enslaved, till that blessed moment should arrive in the fullness of time, when Lord Rockingham should come with power and glory to deliver the country by that one single act and end of his mission, the turning out of the King's men?

Mr. Burke's pamphlet having tended to nothing but to the discredit of himself and his party, the rest of the session produced little heat, and one very commendable act of the Legislature. Mr. George Onslow had brought in a bill (a tribute to popularity) to take away the privilege of peers and members of Parliament, except for their own persons, so that they should no longer be able to screen their houses and goods from their creditors, nor be allowed to extend protection to their domestics. The bill passed easily through the Commons, many of the members who were inclined to oppose it, trusting it would be rejected in the other House—

an income of twelve thousand pounds a year), was one shilling on every chaldron of coals entered in the port of London. The Duke answered nobly, that however detrimental the bill might be to his interest, he would not oppose it, as it might lower the price of coals to the poor.

The day before the Lords gave up their privileges, they fined some printers for abusive papers on different peers.

On May the 8th Alderman Trecothick moved the other House for the instructions given to General Gage, which, he affirmed, were repugnant to those sent to our governors in America. This drew on a long debate on American affairs; but the motion was quashed, as were, next day, eight propositions made by Mr. Burke, in a fine oration, tending to censure Lord Hillsborough and the Administration for their absurd and contradictory orders to the Governors of the Colonies, to which variations he imputed the troubles existing there. Wedderburne and Lord North had a warm altercation, in which each showed great abilities.¹ Those resolutions, which were strangely refined and obscure, were again moved, but with no better success, in the House of Lords, by the Duke of Richmond.

¹ Cavendish's report of this debate (vol. ii. p. 7) contains little beyond the speech of Governor Pownall, of which no doubt the worthy Governor was himself the reporter.—E.

It again did him honour, that, above joining in the unjust violence of Opposition, his Grace made an apology for Captain Preston. Lord Chatham, who neither agreed with Mr. Grenville nor Lord Rockingham on American questions, kept away on these; but, thinking the Middlesex Election more combustible matter, he and Beckford excited the Common Council to address the King once more on his answer to the remonstrance, which on a division was agreed to, together with a resolution to compliment Lord Chatham on his strenuous defence of the rights of election. The same day, he himself crudely made a motion in the House of Lords for a dissolution of the Parliament. He was answered by the Duke of Grafton, who declared he would never more be connected in business with Lord Chatham. The latter said that declaration was unnecessary, as his own reason for quitting power had been because he would no longer serve with his Grace; adding, that he himself desired never again to be in his Majesty's service. This was taken up with much ridicule, the Ministers protesting they had never known *till now* why his Lordship had resigned. Lord Shelburne owned that the only ostensible reason for dissolving the Parliament was the Middlesex election. This Lord Egmont answered finely, and said Lord Shelburne had *blabbed* what Lord Chat-

ham would not confess. The term *blabbed* exceedingly offended Shelburne, who menaced the Ministers on the disturbances he foretold would happen in America and Ireland—the King's promise to which kingdom of not removing the troops he treated as illegal. Lord Weymouth, observing that Lord Camden had retired without staying to vote, said artfully, the person who could have given the best opinion on the question proposed, had not chosen to take part in it with his friends, or to stay to inform the House. The question was rejected by 60 to 20.

This was the last parliamentary effort of the session on the Middlesex election; very inadequate to the flame with which it had commenced. Not only the violence of the attack had prejudiced the cause, but so divided were the factions in Opposition, that their numbers were now diminished to one half, while the Court party, conducted coolly and rationally by Lord North, acted with some firmness and some system. Yet, outrageous as the assault had been on the House of Commons, and arbitrarily and shamefully as the House had acted, much good sprung indirectly out of the contention. The scandal deservedly thrown on the members for their corruption and servility, and their dread of losing their future elections from their unpopularity, made such impression on most of

them, that, to compensate for their infamy, they concurred in two most wholesome acts, which, perhaps, no other moment could have wrung from them; those were, Mr. Grenville's law for trying contested elections by select committees, and Mr. Onslow's for the restraint of privilege. The blow to the peerage was permanent, who never lose their seats, and indiscriminately useful to creditors against members of Parliament. The less secure were the extravagant, the fewer would be exposed to corruption from necessity. It ought to be a standing rule with the public to take all advantages of forcing concessions and capitulations from the great, when the complaisance of the latter is reduced by interest or shame to court the people; and the equivalent may often be preferable to the point contended for, as well as more easily obtained.

CHAPTER V.

Bold Address of Beckford to the King.—His Death and Character.—Prosecutions of Almon and Woodfall.—Voyage of the Princess Dowager of Wales to Germany.—Eccentric Conduct of the Queen of Denmark.—Suit of Lord Grosvenor against the Duke of Cumberland.—Trial of the Kennedys for Murder.—Conduct of Mr. Horne.—Licence of the Press.—Instances.—Libel on the King of Spain.—Dispute with Spain concerning the Falkland Islands.—Building of the Adelphi.—Its Political Consequences.—Promotion of Lutterell.—Death of Lord Granby.—His Character.—Vacant Regiment bestowed on Conway.—Meeting of the Inhabitants of Westminster.—Imminence of a War.—Diplomacy of Lord Weymouth.—Lord Mansfield meditates Resigning the Speakership of the House of Lords.—Death of Mr. George Grenville.—His Character.

1770.

THE King had scarce time to enjoy the favourable conclusion of the session, before a new attack was made on him. A remonstrance had been sent from Newcastle, and, on May the 23rd, the second remonstrance from the City of London was presented by the Lord Mayor and Common Council. It had been drawn up by Lord Chatham, or formed on one of his late speeches. The King made a short

and firm answer, referring to his former. He had no sooner spoken it, than, to the astonishment of the whole Court, Beckford, the Lord Mayor, desired leave to say a few words. This was totally unprecedented. Copies of all intended harangues to the Sovereign are first transmitted privately to Court, that the King may be prepared with his answer. On this occasion, the King was totally at a loss how to act. He was sitting in ceremony on his throne, and had no means of consult, no time to consider what to do. Remaining silent and confounded, Beckford proceeded, with great expressions of loyalty, and of assurances of the respect and attachment borne to his Majesty by the citizens, and he besought his Sovereign not to listen to secret and malevolent insinuations against them, and humbly solicited some favourable syllable of reply. The King, however, made none, but suffered them to kiss his hand, notwithstanding the murmurs of the courtiers who surrounded him, and who were scandalized at the innovation.

The citizens assembling three days afterwards to consider of an address on the birth of a young Princess, the Aldermen Harley and Rossiter loudly censured the Lord Mayor for his novel address to the King, uncommissioned by the City. It might prevent his Majesty, they urged, from receiving their addresses in the same state with which he received

those from Parliament and the Universities,—a distinction granted to no other corporation but to the City of London; and might occasion a greater inconvenience, for, as the maxim declares the King can do no wrong, should a king on any similar occasion answer improperly, it could not be imputed to his Ministers. Beckford appealed to the Common Council, who applauded his behaviour. Wilkes, who had displeased his party by not attending the remonstrance to St. James's, and who had been reproached as gained by the Court, pleaded that he had not gone thither lest his presence should give occasion to another massacre. He objected to pay much compliment to the King on the birth of his daughter, at a time when his Majesty would lend no ear to the complaints of the City. To the Queen, Wilkes said he had no objection to their saying what they pleased. On the 30th, the address was carried; but at Temple Bar the gates were shut against the Aldermen by the people, who concurred with Beckford and Wilkes in resenting the King's behaviour, and Harley was dragged out of his chariot and escaped with difficulty: but by order of the Lord Mayor the gates were opened, and they proceeded to St. James's, where, before their admission to the King, the Lord Chamberlain notified to Beckford that his late behaviour having been unprecedented, his Majesty desired no such

thing might happen again: to which Beckford, bowing, replied, "To be sure not." They were then admitted to the presence; and though the address was colder than usual, the King told them that while their addresses were so loyal, the City should be sure of his protection.

This was the last public incident in the life of William Beckford, Lord Mayor of London, he dying three weeks afterwards of a violent fever, contracted, as supposed, from the agitation into which his violence had thrown his blood, and from sudden cold caught in the country, whither he had retired for a little repose. He died on the 21st of June, aged sixty-two. He had boldness, promptness, spirit, a heap of confused knowledge, displayed with the usual ostentation of his temper, and so uncorrected by judgment, that his absurdities were made but more conspicuous by his vanity. Under a jovial style of good humour, he was tyrannic in Jamaica his native country, and under an appearance of prodigality, interested. On the other side, excesses of his factions behaviour were founded neither on principle nor on rancour. Vain glory seemed to be the real motive of all his actions.

When Beckford received an account of the magnificent seat built at Fonthill being burnt down, he only wrote to his friend, "Let it be rebuilt!" Lord Holland's youngest son, and Beckford inquiring after him, Lord Holland said,

His death was one of the heaviest blows Lord Chatham could receive, cutting off all his influence in the City; and it was another cause of the Opposition's ensuing humiliation, the turbulence of Beckford, his imposing noise, and his great wealth, concurring to his authority. His successors in the party were utterly contemptible, except Trecothick, who was a decent man. This last was chosen Mayor for the rest of the year. A statue was voted to Beckford's memory, and ordered to be placed in Guildhall, with the words he had ventured to speak to the King engraven on the pedestal,—so strong was the party as yet in the City. Lord Chatham, the day before Beckford's death, forced himself into his house, and got away all the letters he had written to that demagogue.

The celebrated Junius alone kept up the flame of opposition with any show of parts; but having at this time satirized the King, even for his private virtues, it did but throw discredit on the author. Almon, the printer, was now tried for selling Junius's former Address to his Majesty; and though he pleaded that the copies had been left at his shop and sold by his servant without his knowledge, the judge told the jury that a master was answerable

had sent him to Richmond for the air; Beckford cried out, "Oh! Richmond is the worst air in the world; I lost twelve natural children there last year!"

likewise tried Almon, endeavoured by the most arbitrary constructions to mislead the jury, telling them that they had nothing to do with the *intention*, nor with the other words in the indictment, as *malicious, seditious, &c.*, which he affirmed were only words of course; and which yet would have fallen heavily on the accused, had the jury paid regard to such abominable doctrine. The despotic and Jesuitic Judge went farther: he said, the business of the jury was to consider whether the blanks were properly filled up; as to the contents of the paper, whether true or false, they were totally immaterial—no wonder juries were favourable to libellers, when the option lay between encouraging abuse, and torturing law to severe tyranny! It did the jury honour that they preferred liberty to the voice of the inquisitor. Not content with open violations of justice, he carried the jurors home with him—though without effect.¹ Nor was his management of the two trials less wicked. He had selected Almon for the first sacrifice, though only a second publisher, before Woodfall, the original editor, be-

¹ All that Lord Mansfield did, was to receive the verdict of the jury at his own house. There was not the slightest impropriety in this. It is still a common practice on the circuit for the verdict to be returned at the judge's lodgings; and the old writers say, that if a jury will not agree, the judge may carry them round the circuit in a cart.—(Some account of this trial is given in the notes to Woodfall's Junius, vol. i. p. 354.)—E.

Guines,¹ a man of less abilities, but very grateful to this country from the decency and fairness of his behaviour.

Another journey excited uncommon curiosity. The Princess Dowager of Wales, after an uninterrupted residence of thirty-four years in this country, and after having secluded herself in a manner from the world during the last nine years, set out for Germany, under pretence of visiting her brother, the Duke of Saxe Gotha, and her daughters, the Queen of Denmark, and the Princess of Brunswick. As mystery and policy were imputed to all her actions, her declarations were not believed, merely because

¹ The Comte de Guines had been for some years Ambassador at Berlin—a post he procured through the intervention of Madame Montesson, preparatory to her marriage to the Duc d'Orleans. He belonged to the school of Choiseul, Richelieu, Soubize, and Lauzun. His embassy to London involved him in a very unpleasant suit with his secretary, La Forte, who, having lost large sums in stock-jobbing speculations during the excitement caused by the expected war with Spain on account of the Falkland Islands, declared himself bankrupt, and endeavoured to prove that he had been the agent of M. de Guines in these speculations. The action was eventually decided in the Ambassador's favour, but only after long litigation, in the course of which it was difficult to avert strong suspicions of the truth of the charge.—(Flassan's *Diplomatie Française*, vol. v. p. 54.)—M. de Guines emigrated during the Revolution, and died in 1806, aged seventy-one.—(See more of him in Thiebault's *Frederic the Second*, and the *Mémoires de Madame de Genlis*, vol. i. p. 252, seqq. and vol. ii. p. 40.)—E.

Mr. Legrand and Mr. Charles, and not less on the Princess herself, so totally had his education been neglected. He had been locked up with his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, till the age of twenty-one, and thence had sallied into a life of brothels and drunkenness, whence the decency of the elder, and his early connection with Lady Waldegrave, preserved the Duke of Gloucester. The younger was pert, insolent, senseless, and not unwillingly brutal. So little care taken of a Prince of the Blood did but confirm the opinion of the public, that the plan of the Princess, Lord Bute, and the King had been to keep down and discredit the King's brothers as much as possible. The Duke of Cumberland, at least, did not disappoint the scheme, as will hereafter appear. As a dozen years afterwards it was evident that no greater care, though with still more rigorous confinement, had been taken of the morals and style of the Prince of Wales, who issued from that palace of supposed purity, the Queen's house, as if he had been educated in a night-cellar, it gave but too much ground for suspecting that, undeterred by what had happened to his brother, the jealousy of his heir had not been less predominant in the King than it had been in the neglect of his brothers.

Other trials of note there were at that time. Lord Chatham lost a cause against one of Sir

plantations, when Horne, the clergyman, and other discontented persons complained of the pardon, and not only complained of it to blacken the King, but, horrible spirit of faction ! instigated the watchman's widow to appeal against it, which, if sentence should again follow, would bar all pardon ; nor could the King do more than reprieve from time to time. The woman did prosecute ; and the young man was again remanded to his gaol and terrors, a second punishment, unjustly inflicted ; for, though probably guilty, he had satisfied the law. Nothing, however, being more difficult than to effectuate such appeal, errors were continually found, the prisoner was remanded to prison as often as brought to trial, and the widow at last yielded to a compensation,¹ notwithstanding the unwearied endeavours of the merciless priest. That turbulent divine was soon afterwards found guilty himself of defaming Mr. Onslow, and fined 500*l*. He was one of the principal incendiaries and promoter of all libels, and, in truth, their excess was shocking, and in nothing more condemnably than in the dangers they brought on the liberty of the press, which it was difficult for its warmest friend to

¹ More of this trial may be seen in Woodfall's Junius, note, vol. ii. p. 153, and the Annual Register for 1770, p. 100—108, &c. A most disgraceful affair it was to all parties concerned, except the King.—E.

defend. It was in every man's mouth, that the evil was grown past-sufferance. Every man trembled, expecting, what almost every man experienced, abuse. The good name, the credit, the character of all were at the mercy of anonymous maligners and a mercenary printer. The universal language, that abuse was too general to be regarded, was not an adequate answer. Abuse spreads further than vindication, nor does it even die by neglect: it takes root in the country and makes lasting impressions. Two answers, indeed, there were: first, the difficulty of drawing the line. Ministers are and ought to be lawful game, yet the law could not except them as proper to be abused. The other was the spirit of the Court, which aimed at despotism, and the daring attempts of Lord Mansfield to stifle the liberty of the press, without authority of the law, and without any new restrictions made by the legislature. He had, indeed, effected an aggravation of the excess, for his innovations had given such an alarm, that scarce a jury could find the rankest satire libellous; and that immunity encouraged the printers to go to the most renowned and unwarrantable lengths, of which, to save my impartiality, I will quote some flagrant examples. I have mentioned the embittered licentiousness of Junius, particularly on the Dukes of Bedford and Grafton, reproached with misfortunes

in their families. Another paper, containing severe reflections on the latter Duke, was published, affecting to be written by the Duke of Richmond. A second paper, attributed, in like manner, to the Duke of Grafton, threatened to kick the Duke of Richmond,—infamous, though unsuccessful attempts to excite a duel between those adverse lords!

The other instance, of a blacker, because of a more extensive dye, as it might have proved, was at least distinguished by the novelty and singularity of its humour. It was a very ludicrous and ironic satire on the King of Spain, though many of the facts were borrowed or by mistake adapted to him from his mad brother, the late King Ferdinand.¹ A second letter was promised on the King of France; but three French officers went to the printer and stopped it, by vowing they would murder him, if any invective against their master should appear. Some Spaniards were disposed to execute what the French had threatened, but were with difficulty prevented by their Ambassador, the Prince of Masserano, who told them they would infallibly be hanged. They said they could not die in a better cause. That Prince was inexpressibly hurt, and told our Ministers he did

¹ This letter being too long for a note is inserted in the Appendix.—(See the reference to it in the Table of Contents.)—E.

not know how to write the account to his Court; he wished the insult might not cause a war. This attempt was the more flagitious, by being calculated to blow into a flame a quarrel of a serious nature then in agitation between the two Courts. Despairing faction grounded its last hopes on blood and a rupture between the two nations.

In the account of Lord Anson's voyage round the world, there is dropped a hint that a settlement in the South Sea would be of great advantage to England in time of war. Lord Egmont, when at the head of the Admiralty, had adopted that idea, and caused possession to be taken for us of one of the Falkland Islands, a desolate rock near the straits of Magellan. According to the received code of European usurpation, prior occupancy or discovery implies right. To have taken nominal possession of another country, not before known to any of us invaders, constitutes property among Christian potentates, or robbers, and by that piratic jurisprudence, the Falkland Islands belonged to, though abandoned by, Spain. Our breach of this iniquitous seniority of claim was highly resented by the King of Spain, personally a hater of England ever since he had trembled before our navies, when only King of Naples, and had been humbled in the last war. The Governor of Buenos Ayres, within whose district lay the desert in question,

was ordered (underhand) to dispossess us, and did. That intention had been known to our Administration some months before the Duke of Grafton quitted the reins ; but, according to his custom, he had neglected the notice, or, with equal indifference, had intended to slubber over the quarrel in tame conferences with the Spanish ambassador here ; and there the affair had dozed, till the “ Favourite ” sloop, arriving in the month of June, brought advice that our colony had been expelled from the island, and, by rousing the nation, awakened the Administration. Whether we had been the aggressors or not, was not a consideration to have weight with the people, much less with Opposition. Nothing was in the mouths of either but the insult ; and whatever the Ministers thought, or whatever they proposed to bear, it was not openly that they dared to talk any language but war, or at least resentment. Orders were given to fit out fleets and to impress men, and a messenger set off for Madrid to demand immediate restitution of the island. The answer was very indefinite, and too unsatisfactory to bear publication. A categorical answer was then said to be demanded, but no such answer arrived. France talked peace ; her finances were greatly in disorder ; we trusted to their language or their situation ; Spain behaved as depending on their support, or as resolved to

extort it; but I must not too much anticipate events. A fire in the magazines at Portsmouth, to a considerable amount, and the authors of which were not discovered, was imputed rather to our friends the French than to Spain our enemy, and looked like a return for a discovery the former had made of some such design from hence. A young Irish officer of some birth, Gordon by name, who had fled for a duel, had been beheaded at Brest, and had been proved to have been in the pay of our Ambassador, Lord Harcourt.

Wilkes still kept up a flame: he was chosen Master of the Joiner's Company, procured a remonstrance from the county of Surrey, and Richard Oliver, an unknown young citizen, but a member of the Bill of Rights, was chosen unanimously to represent the City of London in the room of Beckford. Eyre, the Recorder, an able man and spirited, offended the City by refusing to attend their remonstrance, which he affirmed was a libel. All the prejudice they could do to him was to refuse to consult him on points of law, by which he lost about 200*l.* a year.¹ They had a longer contest with the

¹ The spirit and talent which he showed in these altercations with the Livery, contributed to raise him to the Bench. He died Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, in 1799, in his sixty-fifth year. His decisions are still cited with respect. The trial of Horne Tooke is the only instance where he seems, by common consent, to have made a poor figure.—E.

Adams, Scottish brethren and architects, who had bought Durham Yard, and erected a large pile of building with dwellings and warehouses, under the affected name of the Adelphi. These men, of great taste in their profession, were attached particularly to Lord Bute and Lord Mansfield, and thus by public and private nationality, zealous politicians. The citizens, on whose rights over the river they had encroached, went to law with them, and applied to Parliament, where Court partiality on one side, and party malice on the other, considered nothing but their several prejudices: the influence of the Crown decided, accordingly, in favour of the Adams. But the circumstance which makes that contest history, was, its giving date to a new subdivision of factions. Debates for and against the Adams had run very high amongst the Aldermen and Common Council. Their speeches, or rather their personal abuse, were printed in the public parades with the parade of Parliamentary orations. Alderman Harley said, he rejoiced at any disgrace that fell on the City; and that the Aldermen had been very indulgent to suffer Wilkes to stand candidate for the City when he was outlawed. Wilkes with equal modesty replied, that in so doing they had acted very illegally. But the person who took the lead in those wrangles was Alderman Townshend, the agent of Lord Shelburne, who, it now came out,

was tampering to wrest the City out of Wilkes's hands. He had even gained over Parson Horne, the publisher of those vulgar debates; and who, to serve his new friends, constantly gave the advantage to Townshend over Wilkes,—sources of a quarrel that blazed much higher afterwards, and ruined the Opposition in the City.

The Court, as if to balance the advantages they reaped by the feuds in the Opposition, gave a new handle to clamour by raising their desperate tool, Colonel Lutterell, to be Adjutant-General in Ireland, obliging Colonel Cunningham, who had distinguished himself by restoring the discipline and model of the Irish army, to exchange that post for a government which they forced from Colonel Gisburne for a large pension, and the promise of the next good government. Cunningham abandoned them the next year in their distress. The gratitude of the Lutterells was of another kind, and will have its place.¹ The Middlesex election was still the favourite grievance. A meeting of the freeholders of Yorkshire was advertized, in order to remonstrate, for the 26th of August, but the High Sheriff refused to summon the county; on which Lord John Cavendish and twenty-seven more, advertized a meeting for the 25th of September. When that day arrived, Charles Turner proposed a new remonstrance; but to the surprise of

¹ On the marriage of the Duke of Cumberland.

the most zealous, Sir George Saville talked with much moderation ; and Lord John occasioned greater astonishment by advising the assembly to expect, by decency, redress from the King. The assembly, not knowing how to decipher that change of language, broke up perplexed, and content with thanking their representatives, Sir George Saville and Lascelles.

The key to this mystery, never publicly divulged, was, that Lord Mansfield had opened a negotiation with Lord Rockingham, whose aunt he had married, and the Court had offered to make sacrifices of two or three of its most specious friends : but as the Marquis, who had come to town on purpose to conclude the bargain, found it by no means intended to reinstate him in the first place, the treaty broke off, after the leaders had shown how ready both sides were to give up their second-rate friends.

While discord and interest thus tore in pieces the Opposition, fate was preparing to deprive them of their most important centurians. Beckford was already gone. The next was the Marquis of Granby, the idol of the army and of the populace. He died at Scarborough, October 20th : in so few months did Lord Chatham lose his tribune and his General, and was reduced to his ill-content friend, Chancellor Camden, his ill-connected brother, Lord Temple, and his worse-reconciled brother, Mr. Grenville !

Were there any reality in the idea that noble blood diffuses an air of superior excellence over the outward form, and refines the qualities of the mind; and were that idea not refuted by the majority of examples to the contrary, Lord Granby would have appeared a shining instance of both effects. His large and open countenance, its manly and pure colours glowing with health, his robust and commanding person, and a proportion of florid beauty so great, that the baldness of his head, which he carried totally bare, was rather an addition to its comely roundness than a defect, and a singularity more than an affectation,—all distinguished him without any extrinsic ornament, and pointed out his rank when he walked without attendance, and was mixed with the lowest people, who followed him to beg his charity, or to bless him for it. His mind was as rich in the qualities that became his elevated situation. Intrepidity, sincerity, humanity, and generosity, were not only innate in his breast, but were never corrupted there. His courage and his tenderness were never disunited. He was dauntless on every occasion, but when it was necessary to surmount his bashfulness. His nerves trembled like a woman's, when it was requisite that he should speak in public. His modesty was incapable of ostentation.¹ His rank, his services, and the idola-

¹ No lines were ever more apposite than the following of Dr. Young to Lord Granby:—

try of the people could inspire him with no pride,—a sensation his nature knew not. Of money he seemed to conceive no use but in giving it away: but that profusion was so indiscriminate, that compassion or solicitation, and consequently imposture, were equally the masters of his purse. Thus his benevolence checked itself, and wasted on unworthy objects the sums he often wanted to bestow on real distress.¹ Nor was it less fatal to his own honour, but plunged him in difficulties from which some discretion in his bounty would have secured him. As his understanding was by no means proportioned to his virtues, he was always obnoxious to the interested designs of those who governed him; and between his own want of judgment and the ascendant of those who hampered him in their toils, by

“ Of boasting more than of a bomb afraid,
A soldier should be modest as a maid.”

‘ “ — Granby stands without a flaw ;
At least, each fault he did possess
Rose from some virtue in excess.
Pierc’d by the piteous tale of grief,
When wretches sought of him relief,
His eyes large drops of pearl distilling,
He’d give—till left without a shilling !
What most his manly heart-strings tore,
Was, when he felt, and found no more.”

Poem by Major Henry Waller, in the Gentleman's Magazine for September, 1784.

supplying his necessities with money at exorbitant interest, he was bought and sold by successive Administrations and different parties ; and generally, when the former fell, he abandoned those he had attached himself and been obliged to, and lent himself to measures which his principles disapproved, and then reverted to those principles against his inclination. No man meant to feel more patriotism, or to be more warmly attached to the constitution of his country ; yet his unsuspecting nature suffered him to be easily made the tool of its enemies ; and when he sacrificed his darling command of the army in a convulsion of integrity, he neither acted with grace nor firmness, nor showed a knowledge of the question for which he devoted himself, nor made the stand so soon as he ought to have done ; and, what was worse, he was forced upon the step he took unwillingly by a man¹ who had not the reputation of common honesty, or pretended to be actuated by any principle but self-interest and revenge.

In an age more simple, Lord Granby had been a perfect hero. In a rude age he would probably have been a successful general from his own valour, and the enthusiasm of attachment which his soldiers felt for him ; but in times wherein military knowledge is so much improved, it was perhaps fortunate

¹ John Calcraft.

for his country that the sole command was never entrusted to him on any capital emergency. Yet they must have been the many solid virtues which he possessed, that could make him so greatly respected in a corrupt age, when talents are more esteemed than merit, or when hypocrisy alone runs away with the character and rewards of virtue.

His domestic qualities were all of the amiable kind. His only remarkable vice proved fatal to him: his constant excesses in wine inflamed his sanguine complexion, hurrying him out of the world at forty-nine!

The regiment of Blue Guards, vacant by Lord Granby's death, was immediately given to General Conway. Lord Holland, when acting Minister in the House of Commons, had carried a positive promise of that regiment, on the first vacancy, to the Duke of Richmond. The Duke, who did not expect that engagement would be kept to him, now in earnest opposition, wrote an artfully handsome letter to the King to release him from that promise; but his Majesty had violated it before he received the Duke's dispensation, and made no answer.¹ The Duke was not less hurt at Conway's

¹ The King no doubt regarded his promise to a young courtier absolved by the latter becoming a politician, and entering into active opposition. It is extraordinary, too, that the Duke should not have been acquainted with the promise made to Conway.

accepting the place, knowing it had been promised to his Grace. Conway pleaded having had no notion that the Duke thought of it, now he was so fixed in opposition. The Duke owned he had not expected it; but asked Conway a distressing question,—whether he had had more friendship for Lord Granby, for whose sake he would not accept the Ordnance, which Lord Granby had resigned, than for him, who was his son-in-law and intimate friend; yet Lord Granby had resigned it, which made a difference—and Conway, who was fonder of applause than money, thought it would be popular to refuse Lord Granby's spoils. The King was probably not sorry to occasion a jealousy between the Duke and Conway; but I reconciled them. The Duke for years resented the King's breach of his word; and though he paid his duty to the Queen, he constantly left the drawing-room without approaching the King. The fluctuation of parties in 1783 and 1784 brought them together again; but though the Duke grew a zealous courtier, contrary to his many warm declara-

That promise the King certainly kept in the most honourable manner. In a letter to Lord North of the 1st of October, his Majesty says, “ You will hear of applications for the royal regiment of Horse Guards on the death of Lord Granby. I therefore tell you that General Conway, when Secretary, and on his resignation, had a promise of them. I therefore shall immediately send to Lord Barrington to make out the notification.”—(King's MS. Letters to Lord North.)—E.

tions, the King, who had given the offence, was not so cordially reconciled ; -and though he always embraced an enemy to expose him, his alacrity was as great in sacrificing him on the first opportunity.

On the 27th of October, the Princess of Wales and the Duke of Gloucester returned from Germany. They travelled all night and arrived very early in London, to prevent her Royal Highness receiving any insults from the populace.

The preparatives for war and the want of men occasioned orders being given for pressing. Wilkes, as the patron of liberty, declared against that practice as illegal ; and, as sitting Alderman, dismissed a man who had been impressed within the liberties of the City. Sawbridge did the like ; yet the latter was by no means attached to Wilkes, nor led by him. The strictness of Sawbridge's principles and the insinuations of his comrade Townshend, had made him look with aversion on the profligacy of Wilkes. They publicly disagreed at a numerous and tumultuous meeting of the lowest inhabitants of Westminster, assembled by invitation in the Hall, where Wilkes read a Paper to them calculated to promote an impeachment of Lord North for the neglect of the Falkland Islands, for advising the measures taken on the Middlesex election, and for the contempt into which the nation was fallen with foreign countries. The paper recommended to

in so venal a Parliament Lord North would be sure of an acquittal, which would only do him service (and in truth it was evident that Lord North was only attacked as Minister for the time being). Sawbridge therefore proposed another remonstrance to the King, which was agreed, and was confined almost to the Middlesex election. It was signed by Wilkes as chairman of the assembly, and presented to the King on the 7th of November by Sir Robert Bernard, who would not kneel when he delivered it. Wilkes published an enthusiastic account of the above meeting, professing he believed that the voice of the people was the voice of God.

This unprosperous state of the Opposition was very favourable to the Ministry, especially to Lord North, who wished to avoid a war with Spain; nor was the unprejudiced part of the nation at all eager for war. The Rockingham party called for it to embarrass the Government, and the patriots in the City meant to clog the operations of it. In this situation no answer being arrived from Spain, and the Session of Parliament being ready to open, it seemed extraordinary that Lord North, possessed of so much power, did not put off the meeting, which was fixed for the 13th of November, as it was possible a definitive answer might arrive on the 10th, and leave but three days to determine on

was proper; but the caution was so great, and the repetitions so frequent, that it looked more like fear of the letters being called for by Parliament, than dignity inspired by national honour. It was understood so little in the latter light by the Duc de Choiseul, that he said to Thomas Walpole, then at Paris, "Milord Weymouth ne parle point, et Milord Rochfort parle trop." The latter was a weak man, zealous against France, and obnoxious to Choiseul, who, made impatient by Lord Weymouth's dilatory darkness, and apprised of Lord North's pacific disposition, said at last to Robert Walpole, "Votre Ministère ne veut pas faire la guerre, et ne sait pas faire la paix." Wood came under bad suspicions, and, I believe, very deservedly, on this enigmatic conduct, to which many motives concurred. His ideas were by no means ready, though in writing he had the art of elucidating them beautifully. He was full of guile, dark, and interested. His patrons, Lord Weymouth and Lord Gower, were impatient to overturn Lord North, and share or scramble for his power; and Wood, though willing to promote their views, had certainly a farther view of his own. He was impressed with a notion that war with Spain was unavoidable; and concluded that his ancient master, Lord Chatham, would be called out by the nation to manage that war—at least, on the first check given to our arms.

Lord Mansfield, Speaker of the Lords, acquainted the King with his intention of quitting that post. As there was so little time for supplying his place, both the King and Lord North were grievously offended with him;¹ but to the public it was matter of triumph and ridicule, pusillanimity being the sole reason of his abandoning so lucrative a post. Lord Chatham had sent him word, that he would inquire into and complain of the administration of justice in this country, four of the judges being become dependent on the Court—his Lordship as Speaker of the House of Lords, and three of the others as Commissioners of the Great Seal. The panic occasioned by that threat operated so strongly, that the King was obliged to determine on the Attorney-General for Lord Keeper; but as his health would not allow him to officiate immediately, Lord Mansfield, hoping that he had deprecated the thunder by publishing his intended resignation, consented to act for a few days; and by degrees recovering his abject spirits, was reconciled by the sweetness of the profit; and remained Speaker.

The second event hinted at, was the death of Mr. George Grenville. He had been dangerously ill in the summer, had recovered in some degree, relapsed, and had been brought to town in October for ad-

¹ This is confirmed by the King's correspondence with Lord North.—E.

vice, where he soon fell into a desperate state, followed by a delirium that lasted to his death, which happened the very morning the Parliament met. His body being opened, his case appeared most singularly uncommon: his ribs were carious or quite worn away, and his skull as thin as paper. This extraordinary malady was imputed to a disorder in his blood, which had penetrated to the blood-vessels of his bones, and had corroded them.

Mr. Grenville was, confessedly, the ablest man of business in the House of Commons, and, though not popular, of great authority there from his spirit, knowledge, and gravity of character.¹ His faults, however, had been capital, and to himself most afflicting. His injudicious Stamp Act had exposed

¹ He was feared by all the leading men in the House, even by Mr. Pitt, who frankly told the King, during the negotiations in 1765, which ended in the admission of the Rockingham party into office, that, without Mr. Grenville, he saw nothing in the Treasury either solid or substantial; (see also *supra*, vol. ii. p. 191). His knowledge, in revenue matters particularly, made him most formidable in Opposition; (Sir Gilbert Elliot's MS. Journal.) Mr. Fox did not entertain an equally high opinion of him, and used, indeed, to speak slightly, both of his knowledge and abilities; but Mr. Fox was a very young man when he knew Mr. Grenville, and they were not only, in all respects, very unlike, but the general turn of Mr. Fox's mind would make him view Mr. Grenville's defects in an exaggerated light, and many circumstances, not the least being the disagreement between Lord Holland and Mr. Grenville, combined to place them on far from a friendly footing.—E.

us to the risk of seeing all our Colonies revolt; and his resentment of the repeal had prevented him from ever forgiving Lord Chatham and Lord Rockingham, a sincere junction with whom might have driven the Court to restore him to power. His rash and ungrateful provocation of the Favourite, his indecently taking part with the Bedfords in their violent insult to the Princess on the Regency Bill, his forcing the King to break his word and turn out Mr. Mackenzie, and his silly parsimony in stinting the King's expense in trifles, were crimes that had never been forgiven—the King, the Princess, and the Favourite being as weak in not pardoning him, as he had been in offending. No man would have seconded their views with more resolution or a more vindictive spirit. This was well-known to Lord Mansfield, who had constantly aimed at the restitution of Grenville, and whose recent panic had been increased by the prospect of Grenville's death, having probably been privy to, if not the mediator of, a secret treaty that came out after Grenville expired. The latter, in short, had made his peace with Lord North, and was ready to accept almost any place. A new coldness that appeared between Lord Chatham and Lord Temple was no doubt owing to this transaction, Grenville depending too much on his brother for the reversion of the family

estate to have dared to treat with the Court, unless secure of Lord Temple's sanction. That coldness, however, was laid on the private affairs of the family. A panegyric immediately pronounced by Lord North on Grenville on the day of his death—a promise made, and soon performed, of taking care of Whateley, his secretary—the revolt of Lord Suffolk and Lord Hyde (Grenville's intimate friends) to the Court—their ensuing preferments, and the accession of almost all his faction to the majority, to the absolute dereliction, not only of Lord Chatham, but of Lord Temple, confirmed the negotiation—at least, proved how secure Lord North had been of Grenville's concurrence. To Lord Temple's factious ambition his brother's death was fatal. He could not command a vote in either House, nor could avoid the part he took of declaring his intention of abandoning politics. Lord Chatham was left almost as destitute of followers; and Lord Rockingham, his competitor Grenville being removed, now depended on being named to the Treasury, should Lord Chatham ever recover power: but Grenville's death was no step to the success of the Opposition.

CHAPTER VI.

King's Speech.—Debates on the impending War.—Speeches of Barré and Lord Barrington.—Imprudent Declaration of the Latter.—Opposition of Wilkes to the system of Pressing.—Curious Conduct of Sir Walter Blacket.—Motion for Papers on the Falkland Islands, in both Houses, rejected.—News from Spain.—Alleged want of Preparation of England.—Intemperance of Charles Fox and the Duke of Richmond.—Lord Chatham attacks the Administration in the House of Lords.—Preparations for War.—Lord Mansfield delivers a Copy of his Determination in Woodfall's Trial.—Remarkable Scene.—Members of the Lower ejected from the Upper House.—Debate on Lord Mansfield's Paper—Abruptly Terminated—Why not Resumed.—Debate on the Ejection of the Commons.—Duel between Governor Johnstone and Lord George Sackville.—Instance of Scotch Nationality.—Resignation of Lord Weymouth.—Observations on his Character and Conduct.—Opinion of Francis the French Resident.—Downfall of the Duc de Choiseul—Its Causes.—The Duc D'Aiguillon and the Parliament of Bretagne.—Persecution of La Chalotais.—Treachery of the Prince of Condé.—The Duc retires to Chanteloup in Touraine.

1770.

THE King's speech to both Houses affected firmness, though it betrayed a want of it; for, though

it blustered, and called the Falkland Islands *the possession* of his Crown, and promised not only to support the just rights and interests of his people, but went so far as to say he would not disarm till convinced of the sincerity of other powers (meaning France); yet, by imputing the seizure of the Isle to the Governor of Buenos Ayres, as if not authorized by the Crown of Spain, it openly presented an excuse which the King of Spain might make, if he would be so good as to condescend so far. Nor could the suspicion dropped against the sincerity of France avail much; they knew our Court too well to misinterpret our real disposition. As the Opposition was more in doubt what part the Ministers did actually intend to take, and as Mr. Grenville's death prevented the appearance of the Lords Temple, Chatham, and Lyttelton, little was said in either House, except a few words by Lord Rockingham and the Duke of Richmond, the former of whom seemed rather to approve war, as did the complexion of both Houses. Lord North spoke prudently, but confessing he did not think the Falkland Islands an adequate occasion of war. Colonel Barré attacked the Ministers on their neglect (and, indeed, the lapse of a year since the first advice of Spain's hostile intentions was the great blemish of the business); they had, he said, wasted three years in hunting down a wretched

scribbler, (Wilkes,) while all the world knew that Gibraltar and Ireland were defenceless (a most indiscreet avowal at the eve of a war!) He did not know who advised in military matters, yet he knew who did *not*, though so very proper; but that person, (Conway,) he heard, had retired from the Cabinet Council. "Yes," cried he, correcting himself, and turning towards Lord Barrington, "I know who has sometimes commanded" (alluding to the slaughter in St. George's Fields). The contemptible description of Wilkes was in consequence of Lord Shelburne's plan of annihilating that demagogue, against whom Parson Horne was now waging open, though anonymous, war in the newspapers. The Court had soon afterwards the satisfaction of seeing them worry one another in print by name.

Barré's attack called up Lord Barrington, who uttered the most improper, the most impertinent, and most offensive speech, *in every light*, that could be conceived. He did not know, he declared, an officer in England fit to be commander-in-chief. Could any man name one to him? where was any such man? if there was, if anybody would point him out, he would recommend him to his Majesty. "It was said," continued he, "in Queen Anne's reign, that Dr. Ratcliffe and an old woman could cure an ague; so, the Adjutant-General (General Harvey) and he (Barrington) could make the

best commander-in-chief." Disgraceful as such a declaration was, if true,—indiscreet to make to the enemy, a war approaching,—indecent to the Duke of Gloucester, who was sitting in the gallery,—to General Conway, on whom all eyes turned, as on one on whom the choice would of course fall,—and insolent as it was to all our other Generals; yet had not absurdity dictated this public affront to the army—an affront offered by the Secretary at War. Knowingly, nay artfully, had the dirty little creature exposed himself to so much resentment. He knew, in short, that the King was jealous of the command of the army; that he trusted to its attachment against any violence from his subjects; that he would not confide even in his devoted brother, nor in the integrity (because founded on constitutional principles) of General Conway. It was an officious declaration that commander-in-chief there was to be none; it was an indirect method of saving the King the pain, or rather the blush, of refusing the command to his brother; and the King's ensuing silence, and his continued favour to Barrington, left no doubt but the zeal was kindly accepted.¹ The offence grated

¹ Walpole's suspicions of Lord Barrington's motives are probably correct. The King (as the editor has reason to believe) always felt great unwillingness to trust the command of the army to any officer taking a prominent part in politics. His notion was that

the chief officers, men of renowned bravery and service, such particularly as the Generals Amherst and Monckton. Lord Waldegrave and General Howard took up the affront warmly without doors, and happy was the officious tool to escape without a personal quarrel. It was not, perhaps, the least part of his elaborate indecency, that, had a war ensued, the soldiery might have been impressed with contemptuous ideas of their leaders; but servility cares not how much it sacrifices national interest when pursuing its own. General Harvey, the King's real confidant in military business, pretended to lament that Lord Barrington had pointed him out as responsible for the army—a modesty calculated to enforce the impression.

In consequence of Wilkes's opposition to pressing, Brass Crosby, the new Lord Mayor, one of his most steady partisans,¹ consulted Lord Chatham on the legality of that practice. That lord, not apt to discountenance any measure that tended to carry on

the army ought to be entirely in the hands of the Crown. This must have been the ground of his objection to the appointment of Conway. Lord Barrington's declaration was certainly most injudicious, but it was provoked, not so much by his zeal to please the King, as by the taunts of Colonel Barré. The debate is reported by Cavendish, vol. ii. p. 37. The Government seem to have had the best of the argument.—E.

¹ See more of Brass Crosby *infra*. He rivalled Wilkes in civic popularity.—E.

war against the House of Bourbon, recommended to the magistrate to consult Dunning, Glynn, and Wedderburne. To his queries, whether the Admiralty were authorized to issue press warrants of themselves, or under the direction of the Privy Council; whether the warrant annexed was legal; and whether the Lord Mayor was compellable to back those warrants, and at what risk if he refused; the three lawyers replied, that the practice was warranted by length of time and national defence, and even in some cases by the legislature; that it had been noticed in courts of law, and without reproof; and that they saw no objection to its being executed by the Admiralty under the direction of the Privy Council; that the form of the warrant did indeed to them seem very objectionable, but that for that very reason the sanction of the magistrate was the more requisite to check and control the abuse; and therefore, though they did not deem the Lord Mayor compellable to sign the warrant, nor liable to punishment for refusing, they referred it to his Lordship's prudence, whether for the peace of the City and preservation of the subject, he would not conform to the practice of most of his predecessors on such occasions.

This decision not being satisfactory to the party, the City chose to bestow premiums on voluntary enlisters; in which they were followed by Bristol,

Edinburgh, and a few other towns. At the same time another remonstrance to the King was voted by the Common Council, though not unanimously, and was presented on the 21st by the Lord Mayor, attended by Trecothick, Townshend, Oliver, Stephenson, and a few more. His Majesty told them, that having seen no cause to alter his opinion expressed in his former answer, he could not comply with their request to dissolve the Parliament.

A strange incident, though of no consequence, deserves to be mentioned, as it will show what deep impression the temper of the times had made on an honest mind, though the general corruption of the age had regarded the constitutional considerations lately agitated, as questions of interest rather than of principle. Sir Walter Blacket, a rich independent gentleman, had, though a Tory, voted the last year that Wilkes was capable of sitting as member for Middlesex,—a vote he had probably given against his opinion to secure his popularity at Newcastle, a town not less remarkable than London or Lynn for its attachment to liberty and to the cause of Wilkes. Sir Walter appeared suddenly in the House of Commons, and rising, *à propos* to nothing, with much perturbation, told the House that he had laboured under extreme anxiety of mind and repentance for the vote he had given in

land Islands. Lord Weymouth objected, pleading that the negotiation was actually pending; the demand might, in a week, be proper. Lord Chatham, who supported the motion, turned his fire chiefly against the opposers of pressing, and declared that if any lord would move it, he would second him for bringing to the bar of the House the Alderman who had obstructed the practice. Lord Hillsborough, who was a pompous composition of ignorance and want of judgment,¹ told the House most

¹ Lord Hillsborough was described by Walpole, some years before, as "a young man of great honour and merit, remarkably nice in weighing whatever cause he was to vote in, and excellent at setting off his reasons, if the cause was at all tragic, by a solemnity in his voice and manner that made much impression on his hearers."—(*Memoirs of George the Second*, vol. i. p. 70.)—With such qualifications as a character for independence and some proficiency in public speaking, he was able to render the Ministers essential service, and, in return, they admitted him into their counsels, where he was believed to exercise considerable influence. Lord Holland courted him, and he was esteemed by Mr. Pitt. At length, in 1763, he accepted the post of First Lord of Trade and Plantations, and in 1768, as has been already mentioned, became Secretary of State. He did not maintain in office the reputation he had acquired out of it. Although he made, at times, a tolerable set speech, he proved an imprudent, and by no means effective debater. In the Cabinet he attached himself to the Court party, and gave the most determined opposition to the concessions to America, recommended by the Duke of Grafton and Lord Camden, both of whom charged him personally with exasperating the unhappy differences between the two countries by the course he took with respect to

Of Lord Hillsborough he said, that all our present misfortunes were owing to his tyranny and ignorance; and that, except Lord Rochford, not one of the Ministers had seen six weeks of business before they were raised to the first employments in the State. Gibraltar, he declared, was so weak, that the Spaniards might walk into it when they pleased, and then into England; and that there were not above eleven ships manned in our service. In the City, he said, there was a malevolent party who did nothing but mischief (meaning Wilkes and his adherents—a tribute he paid to his friend, Lord Shelburne); and he abused the rich men there and the Asiatic opulence of Leadenhall Street,—men who thought of nothing but obtaining commissaryships and commissions of remittance; and with his usual pretensions to intelligence, offered to bet a thousand pounds that Spain had already struck some important blow,—an insinuation (though unfounded) that gave an alarm as if Gibraltar were already taken. In answer to the charge on the Ministers of inexperience, Lord Weymouth reminded him that his Lordship himself, and his friend, Lord Shelburne, and ally, Lord Rockingham, had stood in the same predicament of ignorance of business, when they appeared at the head of affairs; and he told the Duke of Richmond, who had threatened their heads, that if the Oppo-

the King, was warmly attacked by Burke, who represented the accusation as addressed to the Parliamentary opponents, whom Conway denied he had meant, saying, he had great esteem for some of them, especially for one family (the Cavendishes), and for whom he had great gratitude, too. This was in contradistinction to Lord Rockingham and Burke, one of whom had neglected, and the other attacked him.¹

The courier from Spain had arrived on the 19th, and it was believed that the Prince of Masserano had at the same time received powers to give us satisfaction. This opinion, and Lord Hillsborough's declaration, had raised the stocks; which fell again in a few days, when it was known that, though Spain did not refuse to restore the island, yet she insisted on our acknowledging her right to it,—a concession rendered doubly difficult on our part by the King's speech, in which he had pronounced it the right of his people, and promised as such to maintain it. Whatever latitude was allowed to the Spanish Ambassador, it was no wonder that he was tenacious of his master's pretensions, when Lord North had acknowledged publicly that he did not think the island worth going to war for, and when

¹ The report of this debate occupies more than thirty pages in Cavendish, vol. ii. pp. 57–88. The speeches were of a discursive character.—E.

Lord Chatham had no less publicly proclaimed our weakness both to Spain and France. Mr. Grenville's singular declaration on Corsica had encouraged the French to pursue their point against that island; and though the opinion of each might well be defended, neither Lord North nor Mr. Grenville had been driven by a clamour for war to avow their pacific sentiments. Lord Chatham excused his display of our inability by pleading that France and Spain must have known our situation without his avowal of it; but it was an ill-timed modesty in him, who was not ignorant how much haughtiness and defiance from his mouth imposed on both those Courts. There was, in truth, great want of men at this time from many causes. The superior pay given by the merchants, the loss of men in the late war not yet repaired, the draughts for India, and considerable migration from Scotland and Ireland to the Colonies, had drained the country. The navy was in a wretched condition; Lord Egmont, while head of the Admiralty, had wasted between four and five hundred thousand pounds on pompous additions to the dockyards. His successor, Sir Edward Hawke, though so brave and fortunate a commander, had never been a man of abilities, and was now worn out, grown indolent, and was almost superannuated, paying so little attention to the fleet, that the ships were rotted in harbour, and of

five ordered to Gibraltar, four had returned as being in too bad a condition to proceed, and the fifth was found rotten before it went to sea. This was as imprudently mentioned in debate by the Duke of Richmond,—an inconvenience resulting from the publicity of our counsels, and a weapon not justifiably, though frequently used by Oppositions. It was more inexcusable that even the newspapers took the liberty of advertising our enemies of our deficiencies, or of what they imagined our intended measures, of which I will quote an instance. The “Swallow” sloop was sheathed with copper. Being the first attempt of the kind, the newspapers concluded, and printed their idea, that she was destined to the West Indies: thus pointing out to the jealousy and enmity of Spain a proper object of their attention.

The suspicions of the public that war must ensue were increased on the 24th at night, all officers being suddenly ordered to their posts, and Lord Howe appointed Commander of the squadron in the Mediterranean. Yet we had not above sixteen ships manned, and the regiments were very incomplete. Happily the navy of Spain was as ill provided with men, and in no condition to profit by our defenceless position. At the same time arrived the new Ambassador from France, the Comte de Guines,—a symptom, at least, that Choiseul, to

whom he was attached, was desirous we should believe that France intended peace. The negotiation, however, remained in the hands of Monsieur Francés, as more conversant with the preceding transaction. This was a very shrewd artful man, who had privately, some time before his public appearance, lived here unknown for three years, in which time he made himself master of our language and affairs. He was the confidential creature of Choiseul.

Still was not Wilkes or the Middlesex election forgotten. Mr. Phipps moved in the House of Commons for leave to bring in a bill to correct informations *ex officio*. Dunning and Wedderburne supported the motion; but it was rejected by 150 to 70.¹ It was not to the honour of the popular hero (Wilkes) that he was at this time cast in a suit brought against him by a French jeweller whom he had defrauded of jewels at Paris. A season of such warmth naturally produced many personalities in Parliament. Charles Fox, the rising genius of the time, had a gross altercation with Wedderburne on an amendment proposed to Mr. Grenville's bill for regulating elections, in which the House was forced

¹ The debate is given by Cavendish, vol. ii. p. 89. It turned more on the law of libel as administered in the recent trials of *Rex v. Almon* than on the specific subject of the motion. The speeches of Mr. Burke and Mr. Serjeant Glynn may still be read with interest.—E

to interpose, and obliged both to ask pardon for their intemperance. A parallel adventure happened among the Lords in a debate for continuing the prohibition of exporting corn, when the Duke of Richmond saying that their chamber was reduced to sit only for registering the dictates of the Crown, or for concurring with the decrees of the Commons, Lord Halifax rose with much heat, said it was a false accusation, and he would never hear such words. It was true that the Chancellor Hardwicke had governed that assembly with solemn decency, and, by his own authority, and that of the Pelhams, had restrained much of the liberty of debate; yet not long before, John Duke of Argyle, and others at other periods, had not suffered themselves to be manacled by such formality. It is as true, on the other hand, that the House of Lords being an assembly far less numerous than the Commons, is less turbulent and more observant of decorum. The nobility, too, are by principle more devoted to the Crown, and having less occasion to make their fortunes by eloquence and the cultivation of talents (though not less corrupt) than the Commons, acquiesce from inability to the dictates of two or three eminent lawyers, whom the Crown occasionally raises to the peerage, after preferring them to the Great Seal or to the posts of Chief Justices.

Lord Chatham, the same day, not intimidated

by Lord Halifax's passion, who was a proud empty man, and mistook anger for argument, moved to call for Captain Hunt of the "Tamer" sloop, who had been driven off the Falkland Islands by the Spaniards. Lord Chatham made a fine oration, and, though often vexed by the Lords Sandwich and Denbigh, was, when Lord Mansfield was silent, as his fears now made him, far superior to all his other adversaries; they were babies to him. He said the Ministers had bungled themselves into such a situation that they could neither make war nor peace; that he should have arguments against them, of whichever they should make option; that he would insist on restitution and reparation, though he supposed they were then actually begging peace at Versailles. He had been blamed, he said, for indiscretion in divulging the nakedness of his country; but it had been parental kindness to give warning to the Ministers: and what had he divulged that was not known to every coffee-house boy in Portsmouth? He endeavoured to soften his late attack on the City, avowing, at the same time, that he had not, nor ever had had, any connection with Wilkes. But highly he commended the integrity of Sawbridge, whom he was sorry he had not talked with before that Alderman had opposed pressing. It was more remarkable that he paid many compliments to the

candour of Lord Weymouth; the other Ministers, in general, he said, were ignorant, futile, and incapable. Lord Weymouth, as if in concert, professed himself ready to resign his post, but declared against Opposition. Neither Lord Temple nor Lord Camden were present at the debate, nor the Lords attached to the late Mr. Grenville. The motion was rejected by 55 to 21, as was, by one less on each side, another motion, likewise made by Lord Chatham, for inquiring at what time the Ministers had received intelligence that the Spaniards intended to seize the Falkland Islands;—they had known it in the preceding December—eleven months! The French had previously settled on a neighbouring little island, but had quitted it to countenance the violence of Spain,—proof sufficient of their co-operation in that hostility; not that Choiseul was circumstanced in a manner that would authorize him to assist them openly in hostilities, but the treaty of Paris had convinced him of the aversion to war in our Cabinet,—a conclusion that now deceived him, and drew him into inextricable perplexity, as I shall show presently. Indeed, considering that, victorious or vanquished, we always make disgraceful treaties, the nation had little cause to prefer war. Forty thousand seamen were now voted.

At this period, died the parent of the approach-

ing war, the Earl of Egmont, a man always ambitious, almost always attached to a Court, yet, from a singularity in his fortune, scarce ever in place.¹

On the 5th of December, Lord Chatham moved a resolution, (which was rejected by 52 to 20,) the purport of which was, that the capacity of being chosen a member of Parliament was ascertained by law, and could not be set aside by any

¹ Lord Egmont united qualifications which seldom fail to raise their fortunate possessor to the highest offices in a constitutional government. He was excelled by few of his time as a public speaker, by none as a political writer. His great talent was said to lie in indefatigable application, and yet he delighted in popular excitement, which he could direct with consummate skill, and with courage that proved equal to any emergency. The effect, however, of these gifts was marred by a perversion of judgment which led him both into gross absurdities, and the most culpable inconsistencies. When scarce a man, Walpole says, he had a scheme of assembling the Jews and making himself their King.—(*Memoires of George the Second*, vol. i. p. 30.)—It is more certain that he regarded the restoration of feudal tenures as the best security for the liberty and welfare of the people! After having been the idol and the leader of mobs, he became the obsequious follower of Lord Bute, and, although a passionate admirer of fame, he sought no result from his political exertions beyond places, titles, and sinecures. His mansion in Somersetshire, a monument of his extraordinary predilection for the middle ages, was pulled down only a few years ago. Walpole has given his character in the *Memoires of George the Second*, vol. ii. p. 32, which is illustrated by some amusing anecdotes in a letter to Sir Horace Mann (*Letters*, vol. ii. p. 260).—E.

separate branch of the legislature. Lord Camden supported the motion, but declaring he stood unconnected with, and unattached to, any man.¹ Lord Mansfield, to soften his dreaded adversary, Lord Chatham, paid many compliments to him on his support of pressing; but, on his having urged the necessity of dissolving the Parliament, represented to him the impropriety of such a tempestuous measure at the beginning of a war; yet no war was begun, and, from the long suspense, men began to conclude that no war would be declared. The Spanish Ambassador was assiduous at Court, was affectedly caressed there, and made no preparations for departing.

But, though Lord Mansfield thus deprecated the wrath of Lord Chatham, the indignation of the friends of freedom was not so appeased. Serjeant Glynn moved for an examination into the conduct of the King's Bench, and Alderman Oliver named Lord Mansfield as the author of the grievances from that Court. The House sat till near one in the morning, but the question was lost by 75 against 180.²

¹ Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. p. 1301.—E.

² This motion arose out of the debate on the power of the Attorney-General to file informations *ex officio*. The able speeches made by Serjeant Glynn and Burke forcibly exposed the injustice of the law of libel, as administered by Lord Mansfield in the

The next day, Colonel Onslow complained to the House, and read, from a magazine called the London Museum, a copy of a letter sent by the Society of the Bill of Rights to the Colonies. (signed by Serjeant Glynn amongst others,) which almost invited them to rebel, and was a strong libel on the Parliament.¹ The King, in his speech, had specified parts of the colony of Massachusetts's

recent trials, and supplied many of the arguments which were afterwards so effectually used in procuring the alteration of the law by Lord Camden and Mr. Fox (Cavendish vol. ii. p. 59, seqq.—E.

¹ This is one of the few instances in which Serjeant Glynn appears to disadvantage. No doubt he felt strongly the wrongs of the Colonists, and shared with Lord Chatham and other leading statesmen of the day, a most unfavorable opinion of the Parliament. No personal considerations influenced him. He was as little tainted by the political as by the moral profligacy of Wilkes. Few of his speeches in Parliament have been preserved, but all are in an elevated tone, and the candour and moderation which distinguish them are not less remarkable than their talent and intrepidity. In these, as in many other respects, he bore a strong resemblance to Sir Samuel Romilly. It is to be regretted that few particulars can now be collected of this valuable man. He belonged to a Cornish family, once settled at a seat of the same name, now the property of Lord Vivian. His practice at the bar was very considerable. Not only did he argue most of the political cases of the day, but it appears, from Mr. Wilson's and the other contemporary reports, that he had a large share of the general business. He succeeded Mr. Eyre as Recorder of London in 1772, when the salary of the office was raised from 800*l.* to 1000*l.* a-year, as a mark of respect towards him. He died in middle life, on the 16th September, 1779.—E.

Bay as guilty of very illegal practices and violences, *though he had confessed¹ that, in most of the other Colonies, the people had begun to depart from their combinations against the mother country. New York, in particular, had refused to concur in them.*

The next day, an augmentation of twelve thousand men to the army was voted, a wise measure, as preparation for war is the best preventive. Yet had we reason to depend on the pacific disposition of the French Prime Minister. In a great council held at Versailles, the Abbé du Terray, Comptroller-General, a personal enemy of Choiseul, proposed to join with Spain in the war, (either to sound Choiseul's intentions, or thinking him not inclined to war,) and engaged to find the necessary funds. He was supported by his instigator, the Chancellor Maupeou; but the Duc de Choiseul, (either suspecting a trap, or to pay court to his master, who was most averse to the war,) with great ability, knowledge, and eloquence, proved so irrefragably the impossibility of finding money

¹ This confession is very memorable. The subsequent behaviour of the Court leaves strong room to suspect that instead of profiting of the favourable disposition of the Colonies by temperate measures, the Court hurried into the succeeding war, and wished to provoke the Colonies to unite, that all might be treated as rebels and conquered. The Ministers did succeed in the provocation, but not in the conquest.

had formerly told me, never to talk to any man but on the business of his department; and Conway, though the deepest master of his profession in the island, happened not to be secretary! That silly caution had been infused into the King by the Princess and Lord Bute, lest it should give the person consulted an opportunity of gaining his confidence, by launching out beyond their province: every audience terminated when each minister had received his orders. To decline receiving information from so able an officer as Conway, and one whom he knew and had declared so disinterested and unambitious, was not the method of rendering himself proper to conduct the army; and Lord Barrington was too ignorant beyond the routine of office to instruct, and too servile to contradict him. General Edward Harvey, the other royal confidant in military matters, was a mere disciplinarian, and not feared by the junto, being of no abilities or importance.

On the 10th of December was great expectation of some solemn scene, Lord Mansfield having given notice to the Lords on the 7th, that he had matter of importance to lay before them. It was supposed that he intended to make his defence against all the late accusations. Though that did not prove entirely the case, the day turned out very remarkable. The House was crowded with members of the Com-

not fit to be divulged to the public and to foreign ministers; and insisted on the House being cleared of strangers, which, by the standing orders of both Houses, any member may do in the House to which he belongs, and which cannot be refused; but Lord Gower, entering into debate, which no man may do when he calls another to order, he was called to order himself; the Duke of Richmond adding, that the Ministry did not dare to hear their faults laid open. Prodigious confusion ensued; and Lord Chatham, in a violent emotion of rage, insisted on being heard, which was impossible from the tumult; and he would have distinguished between the occasion and the general standing order, which, he maintained Lord Gower had had no right to call for, as the subject had not been the order of the day; but he was wrong—and the majority called out violently to have the order put in execution: but the members of the other House refused to retire, Dowdeswell declaring he would be the last man that should go out. This resistance was unjustifiable, and without example. Four other commoners, who had brought up a bill from the other House, said they were come with a message, and had a right to be there; but they too were in the wrong, for the rule is, that they should give notice to the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, and he, acquainting the Lords, is sent to call the messengers

on that occasion, the only regular manner of coming at the proceedings, for the House of Lords being a court of record, their journals are open to the public, which is not the case with the other House. Lord North, to humour the Commons, joined in the blame, but dissuaded the motion. It was battled, however, for two hours; and some Lords who had come thither, were turned out: but the motion was rejected by the influence of the courtiers.¹

The same day General Conway laid before the House a plan for adding a thousand men to the regiment of artillery on a cheap scheme of 17,000*l.*, which, if executed in the ordinary method, would have cost 24,000*l.* Hearing that they would oppose it, he had sent his plan to Lord George (Sackville) Germaine and Colonel Barré, but both returned it with compliments, the first saying he should only make some objections to the mode; the other that he should not oppose it. They both now did make some objections; and others of the Opposition blamed Conway for not having digested more plans for the army. Conway answered that he had done his duty in his office, but was not consulted beyond it, nor in any confidence. This was a declaration they wished. T. Townshend the younger and others exclaimed on *his* not being trusted! What could the

¹ Cavendish's Debates, vol. ii. p. 149.—E.

declared how much he had always courted his esteem; and therefore from his candour had not expected that treatment. He professed he had studied the point more than any other in his life, and had consulted all the judges on it, except indeed his Lordship: but that he must object to being taken by surprise, nor could he submit to answer interrogatories. "Interrogatories!" cried Lord Chatham, starting up, "was ever anything heard so extraordinary? is it taking that noble lord by surprise who has just declared that he has studied the point all his life, and has taken the opinions of all the judges on it? And of all mankind does it become that Lord to refuse interrogatories, who has so recently imprisoned a man [Brindley] for a year or two, for refusing to submit to them?" But the point, he gave the noble Lord notice should be fathomed, and he would bring it to issue. However, he would give his Lordship time, and would let the matter sleep till after the holidays: but he insisted that Lord Camden's paper of interrogatories should be left with the clerk, as Lord Mansfield's had been; which the House could not refuse.

The dismay and confusion of Lord Mansfield was obvious to the whole audience; nor did one peer interpose a syllable in his behalf; even the Court (whom he had been serving by wresting the law,

meetings: men are often borne down at them against their opinions. I will give notice of my intention without further concert.' Serjeant Glynn said he would do the same the next day. Dowdeswell told him there was not time for concert: it would be like the Minister reading the King's speech at the cockpit, after it has been settled. Glynn, however, gave his notice. On that the Rockingham party determined to act for themselves, and drew up a bill to ascertain what directions judges should give to juries. They showed it to Lord Chatham after he had attacked Lord Mansfield. He disapproved it much, but offered to support it if they would make it more personal to Lord Mansfield. They refused.¹ All they meant, they said, was prospect, not retrospect: as if branding a crime committed, were not a better guard than a provision against committing it. Then he must be against them, said Lord Chatham. They consulted Lord Camden. He told them Lord Chatham had

¹ I suspect that Lord Rockingham, whose aunt Lord Mansfield had married, and to whom Lord Mansfield always paid court, meant to save him, though through this whole reign Lord Mansfield had constantly laboured to sap that great palladium of our liberties, juries. As the House of Lords would probably have protected Lord Mansfield, perhaps his panic was a curb to him; whereas an exculpation might have encouraged him. Still the trimming conduct of Lord Rockingham, and Lord Camden, and Lord Chatham was inexcusable.

Pynsent's relation, which the Earl had brought by appeal before the House of Lords, and had by them been referred to the judges, came on before their Lordships for the judges to make their report. They were preparing to give their opinions, five on one side, and three on the other, when Lord Mansfield arriving, said a new idea had struck him, and he was sure he could reconcile the sentiments of all the judges. He stated his position (which is not to my purpose to detail), they pocketed their briefs and notes, said they were persuaded they should all return of one opinion the next day, and retired. They did return, and gave the cause for Lord Chatham, not without censure from the public on the two Lords; the one, as men thought, buying his indemnity by the sacrifice of another man's property; the other waiving justice due to the public to purchase the decision of a suit in his own favour: yet, as the fact happened so late as the 6th of May, *after* the Duke of Richmond had allowed to me that the pursuit against Lord Mansfield was dropped, servility, to which, as has been seen, he was enough prone, might have no share in this instance. I have anticipated an event of the next year, that I might present the reader with the whole transaction together.¹ I return to the end of the year 1770.

¹ This was the case of *Tothill v. Pitt*, of which the details are

served, that Lord Gower's own brother-in-law, Lord Dunmore, had just had *two* governments given to him, New York, and then Virginia. The Duke of Grafton attacked Lord Chatham roughly, who generally bore his severity, perhaps from contempt, as tamely as Lord Mansfield Lord Chatham's. Lord Sandwich said, all the motion could do, would be to take merit or demerit from the Administration. It was rejected by above 40 to 12. As the Ministers affected to make military preparations, a resolution passed to supply the voted augmentation of the army with Irish or Germans.

It was with more alacrity that the Treasury carried a vote of a fourth shilling in the pound on land, by a majority of 299 to 121. The Bedford squadron, discontented with Lord North, who placed no confidence in them, and leaning with Lord Weymouth and Wood to Lord Chatham, who they feared would be Minister, had whispered objections to the increase of the tax. The Duke of Bedford himself declared openly against it, and Rigby, as if by his order, had some time before in the House of Commons owned he should disapprove it, unless there actually should be a war. He now treacherously advised Lord North to postpone the demand till after Christmas; but the Minister doubting with reason the sincerity of the faction, would not be turned aside from his purpose, but carried it with

and Lord George Cavendish, moved that no messages should be sent to the other House but by the eldest sons of peers, who alone would not be in danger of being insulted there; and that such eldest sons should be restrained from going thither on any other occasion. Colonel Onslow, alluding to the two Lords, said, the motion ought to have been that no message should be sent but by the younger sons of peers; and alluding to Lord George Sackville, that the motion seemed to imply timidity. Governor Johnstone went much further, and said, he did not conceive *that any man was proper to take care of the honour of that House, who had forfeited his own honour*. The motion was rejected by about 130 to 40.¹

So gross an insult as Johnstone's called for chastisement, and did prove how much the world and he had mistaken Lord George Sackville. The latter with temper that became the courage he showed, took four days to settle his affairs and to make provision for an infant of which his wife was just delivered; behaving at the same time with a cheerful indifference that deceived her and his whole

¹ The debate on Lord George Germaine's motion is reported in Cavendish, vol. ii. p. 160-172. One result of the quarrel between the Houses was the exclusion of strangers from both, during the remainder of the session. The public, therefore, was kept in ignorance of all parliamentary proceedings that were not made known by the members of either House.—E.

stealing an heiress.¹ The man was a pretended enthusiast, and offered himself to the Court for a martyr, and to the people for one of their representatives. They were not so abandoned as to enjoy such wanton malevolence.

Lord George, become Viscount Sackville, died in the autumn of 1785, of a short illness, and in a manner that once more did him honour. . He spoke of the bitter scenes through which he had passed, and with great firmness declared how resigned he was to death. Of Prince Ferdinand he spoke with singular candour; said his Highness had undone him from resentment; yet was so great a man, that he not only forgave but admired him. General Sloper, his enemy, he said, was a very black man; for Lord Caermarthen, he was so weak, that he felt nothing for him but contempt. It was remarkable that Lord Caermarthen, moderate as his abilities were, disgusting as his assault on Lord Sackville had been, and though disliked by the King, was by the last collision of parties become at that very moment Secretary of State.

[A long note on the character of Lord George Sackville is also given by Walpole in the *Memoirs of George the Second* (vol. ii. p. 432). He evidently bore that nobleman no good will, and falls in the course of his remarks into some inconsistencies, which, as Lord Holland remarks, "it would be difficult to explain, if it were any part of the duty of an editor to explain the contradictions of an author." A well-written and interesting, though partial, account of Lord George is contained in the *Memoirs of his friend and secretary, Richard Cumberland*. Many additional and curious particulars have been collected by Mr. Coventry in that ingenious work, "*Critical Enquiry regarding the real Author of Junius*, proving them to have been written by Lord Viscount Sackville."—E.]

¹ He ran away with a natural daughter of Lord Baltimore, supposed to be of weak understanding, and who, besides, was almost a child.—E.

a similar stand, but it being against a landed Scot, was not supported. To soften the sacrifice to Lord Dysart, the King offered him a green riband: but he, who was one of the proudest, and not one of the brightest of men, did not distinguish between the King's civility and the proscription of himself by his Scottish brethren, and wrote to the Secretary of State that he not only would not accept the riband, but would never serve this King or any other. Next year he asked a military preferment for his brother, and was refused.

The negotiation about the Falkland Islands still continued in suspense. The King of Spain adhered to his declaration of reserving his claim entire, though willing to relinquish the possession; and the public were persuaded that there were different opinions in the Ministry from threats thrown out by the Duke of Bedford that he would go to the House of Lords, and proclaim the necessity of declaring war. Still was the surprise of mankind extreme, when, on the 16th, it was known that Lord Weymouth had resigned the Seals—a mysterious conduct, increased by his own obstinate silence, and by the professions of the Bedfords, that they had not been acquainted with his intention, nor should resign with him. The King, afraid of a breach between the Ministers and him, offered to make any arrangement that might accommodate him with any other place; but he

hostilities, the King, who began to affect a military turn, had been eager for war, and Lord Weymouth, whose ambition aspired to the lead in the Administration, had gone eagerly into the royal views. On that plan, and encouraged by Wood's awe of Lord Chatham, they had thrown every damp on the negotiation, and involved themselves in repeated declarations of the war being unavoidable. Lord North, of pacific mould, and the Scottish junto as apprehensive as Wood that a war would bring back Lord Chatham, had taken a contrary course, and had brought back the King from his martial system. Lord Weymouth, who would not have hesitated to change his language had he thought peace could be effected, chose rather to waive his ambition than his security, and adhered to war. Nor was this all. His extreme indolence and drunkenness made it impossible that he should execute the duties of his office in time of war. He seldom went to bed till five or six in the morning, nor rose next day till twelve or one. His parts must have been great, for in that besotted state he was still able to express himself in the House of Lords with elegance, quickness, and some knowledge, in a few short sentences; not indeed deserving all the applause bestowed on them by his faction. A few reflections on his character and on the time may be useful; as it will seem extraordinary hereafter that a man so

Bute, but veered as suddenly to Majesty at home. Lord Chatham, had he had time, would have dictated to Europe. Fox and Lord Holland established universal corruption and revenge. Grenville exercised rigour and economy. With Lord Rockingham entered redress and relaxation. Lord Chatham's second Administration was an interregnum of inexplicable confusion. The Duke of Grafton did as little, without being out of his senses. The people almost seized the reins next, and the Ministers, to save themselves, were content to secure the doors of the Cabinet and of the House of Commons from being stormed, while both the King and the Parliament were vilified and insulted. His Majesty seemed almost as contented to let the populace brave him, as he had been to let Lord Bute, Lord Holland, and Grenville trample on them.

Among men of such various complexion, Lord Weymouth was not the least singular. He was tall, handsome, and, from a German education, solemn and formal in his outward deportment. His look spoke absence, and nothing in his ostensible appearance discovered a symptom of the quickness, cunning, and dissoluteness within. A perfect insensibility produced constant and facile good humour; yet his bent brow and constitutional pride indicated no pleasantry or social mirth. His parts were strong, his conception ready, his reasoning

they drew on a war too ; till, by misplacing haughtiness, and by a series of wretched measures, they lost at once our colonies in America, and the empire of the ocean everywhere.

I return to Lord Weymouth's resignation, who, Lord Chatham's friends asserted, had advised making reprisals on Spain: whether authorised or prompted by Wood, and whether to drive the resigner into opposition, I know not. Certain it is, that he had advised recalling Mr. Harris, our Minister, from Madrid. Francés told me, that when Lord Weymouth demanded restitution of the island, he had promised to negotiate on the title ; but when Spain consented to the first point, Lord Weymouth affirmed, he had only said that *then* we should be *en état de négocier*. The Spanish Ambassador maintained that his Lordship had three times made the same promise to him as to Francés.

For once such duplicity imposed on nobody ; nor did expected popularity follow. Could there be a greater farce than the Bedfords acting jealousy of national honour, when they knew our inability, and had concurred in sacrificing our glory and interest at the end of the most flourishing war? It was only ridiculous that the Duke of Bedford cried out for war, and opposed the land-tax that was to carry it on ! With equal consistence, that faction celebrated Lord Weymouth for retiring *unplaced* and

back stairs to the apartment of a kept mistress were an honourable ascent for a priest, but her levée a disgrace ! His ingratitude and her revenge were complete in about six weeks. The Duc de Choiseul, who certainly was not often troubled with scruples, and who had risen by the countenance of Madame de Pompadour, now influenced by two women¹ of characters as blemished as the mistress's, affected delicacy about Madame du Barry, who though a common prostitute, at least had not the confidence to act scruples. Yet, though she was the instrument by which his ruin was effected, the crisis turned on an affair of a public nature.

The Duc d'Aiguillon, a man as ambitious as Choiseul, but of a nature as dark as the other was frank and too boldly unreserved, had long been an enemy of the Prime Minister. The Parliaments of France, partly from contempt of the King's weakness, partly from the intrigues of Choiseul, who had played them and the clergy against each other ; and yet more from that free spirit of thinking which they had contracted from applying to English literature and politics, and which Voltaire, Montesquieu, and their modern philosophers, had brought into vogue ; the Parliaments, I say, had long given much trouble to the Crown, and none more than

¹ The Duchesse de Grammont, sister of Choiseul, and the Princesse de Beauvau, her friend.

afterwards Duc de la Vrillière, an ancient drudge of office hackneyed in prosecutions and punishments, and steeled to insensibility by a long series of personal prosperity, and by being as long conversant with the sufferings of others.¹ To passive insensibility he had learnt and added the tricks of treachery; and being now connected with D'Aiguillon, he easily circumvented the provincial credulity of La Chalotais, and drew all his secrets from him by a creature of his own, who acted the friend of the Advocate-General, and went so far as to leave (by a pretended mistake) an important letter he had received from La Chalotais in St. Florentin's own room. The public did justice on the lower of these tools, one Calonne, by hissing him in the theatre. The King was so weak as to justify the wretch publicly—which did but serve to make his infamy more known; but on La Chalotais the storm burst. He was dragged from prison to prison with his son, and at last shut up with him, but in separate dungeons, in the Château du Taureau, a fort in the sea, to which there was access only at low water. It was in a most rigorous winter, and

¹ Louis Philippeaux, created Duc de la Vrillière—the brother-in-law of Maurepas—a willing instrument of oppression, being licentious, selfish, and unprincipled, like too many of his colleagues. He died childless, in 1777, in his seventy-third year.—E.

senger with a reprieve by a private road, La Chalotais had been executed, as the Governor had interrupted and stopped two former messengers sent by Choiseul for the same purpose. Of those intrigues D'Aiguillon fully purged himself in print; and of the last, Choiseul himself declared him entirely innocent. As he could not, however, clear himself of bitter tyranny, the public bated him little of the whole charge; so that, finding himself stand so ill in the eyes of a country which he aspired to govern, he took the resolution of demanding a public trial, and Choiseul took care it should not be refused, which the other did not expect,—artifices that by turns fell on both the artificers. The Parliament's inquisition growing unfavourable to the great criminal D'Aiguillon, he flew for protection to the mistress. She and their Cabal persuaded the King to evoke the cause before himself at Versailles,—a strange and unusual force put on their free deliberations! They protested against the violence. The King silenced all their proceedings and all their remonstrances; a wound as fatal to D'Aiguillon's honour as to their privileges. The Parliament threw up its functions.

At that period, Maupeou, the Chancellor, told the King, that if he would dismiss the Duc de Choiseul, the Parliament would submit, as it was the Minister himself who secretly fomented their disobedience,

was banished to Chantilly; and at last entered into the Cabal of the other Princes of the Blood, and peers, who protested against the violence put on the Parliament.

The Duc de Choiseul received many private warnings of his approaching fate; but did not, or affected not to apprehend it. On the contrary, he gave out that he alone could make the peace, to which Spain would consent solely from esteem and consideration of him. He added, that the peace made, he meant to retire. In the midst of this delirium, or rather vaunt, the Duc de la Vrillière, with tears as insincere as Choiseul's tranquillity, waited on him on the morning of the 24th of December with a written order from the King, commanding him to give up his post of Secretary of State and Postmaster-General, and enjoining him to retire to his seat at Chanteloup in Touraine, till he should hear farther. The Duc de Choiseul demanded if he might not delay till the following Wednesday, that his house might be aired. As La Vrillière hesitated, and seemed unwilling to bear that message, the Duke wrote to the King himself, and obliged the Minister to carry his letter. At night a repeated order came to depart the very next morning. "Ah!" cried Choiseul, "this is the drop that makes the glass run over!" He set out the next day with his wife and her physician. The